

The Spiritual  
**WARFARE:**

O R,

Some SERMONS concerning  
the nature of Mortification,  
right exercise, and spirit-  
ual advantages  
thereof.

Whereunto are added other two  
Sermons, concerning the my-  
stery of Contentment.

Being the substance of ten Sermons, never  
heretofore printed.

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By Mr. *Andrew Gray*, late Minister of the  
Gospel at *Glasgow*.

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Col. 3. 5. *Mortifie therefore your members, &c.*  
Heb. 13. 5. *Let your conversation be without  
covetousness, &c.*

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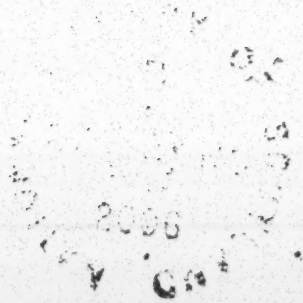
G L A S G O W.

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Unto the sincere Sin-mortifying , and  
Soul-contentment-seeking-  
Christian.

Dear and loving Friend,

**A**S the name of the precious Author ( who now  
enjoyeth what he then aspired to , when he  
preached these following Sermons ) will, no  
doubt, ingratiate them to thee, so we are per-  
swaded, that the divine Subjects here treated upon, when  
perused by thee, whose serious design is to study and aspire  
to what is here pressed , may not only prove effectual to  
increase thy esteem of the worthy Author, and thy respects  
to his works ; but also may highly advance thy soul , in  
thy begun work of mortification of sin , of dying to the  
world, and of having the world crucified to thee , that  
so thou may possess thy soul in patience, and sit down as  
a contented one, in every state whatsoever, good or bad,  
letting patience have its perfect work. O ! how timely  
hath the Lord begun with the blessed Author, to make him  
not only acquainted in his own experience as a Scholar,  
with the hardest lessons of Christianity, but also to make  
him a practical Preacher of the spiritual and successful  
method of learning these so intricat lessons , and of the  
advantages of studying, or disadvantages by the neglect  
of the study of them. This we dare say, that in perusing  
of them , thou shalt find him a work-man, who ( if he  
were alive ) needed not to be ashamed ; nor affraid of  
thy

## To the Reader.

thy censure, if thou be a real student in these spiritual duties thy self. For these two or three things (as eminent perfections in a youth) are most remarkable in him. **First**, that from the speculations and metaphysical contemplations of Schools, he was immediatly, as it were, aduapt, not only into the contemplation, but also soul-experiencing and powerful preaching of the most mysterious points of Christian profession and practice. **Secondly**, that in the handling of these mysteries, he was free of all youthly vanity and affectation of humane literature (though he had more then common abilities therein) and having renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftinesse, nor handling the word of God deceitfully, he preached the Word of God, not as the word of man, but as the Word of God, commending himself to every mans conscience in the sight of God. **Thirdly**, that he was gifted of God with such plainnesse of speech, and with such an open door of utterance, in delivering these mysteries, that he did out-stripe and over-reach many of those who entered into the Lords Vineyard long before him, the Lord verifying that in him which is, 2 Cor. 3. 17. **Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty**, All which singularities and eminencies of a spiritual Preacher, to have been his special mercy from the Lord, to fit him to be eminently a burning and shining light, for the space of about two years in our Western climate, is manifest from what of his Wroks have already come forth to the view of the world, and do now further appear by these excellent and divine Sermons, upon these two most necessary, but little studied and lesse practised points of Christian Doctrine, viz. **Mortification of lusts, and Spiritual Contentment**

never



## To the Reader.

never heretofore Printed. Wherein the zealous servant of  
God endeavoureth to awaken this secure generation unto  
the study of these so excellent and necessary duties, by  
laying before us the necessity of these duties, and the  
advantages attending the study of them, and the prejudices  
and disadvantages accompanying the neglecters of the  
said duties: As also, to encourage and strengthen in the  
way, all such as have begun the spiritual conflict against  
sin, and are aiming at perfection in the study of spiritual  
contentment. He not only presseth the duties, but also  
pointeth out the right means whereby a Christian may  
be helped to attain at last, victory over his lusts, and  
to sit down contentedly with Jonah under the shadow of  
his Gourd, Jon. 3. 6. And be satisfied with Elijah to  
hide himself by the brook Cherith, and to drink of the  
brook, and to have the ravens to feed him there, 1 King.  
17. 3. 4. And to say with David in an universal resign-  
ation of himself to the will of God, 2 Sam. 15. 26.  
Behold, here am I, let him do to me as seemeth  
good unto him: And withall thou shalt find intermix-  
ed, soul-reviving and comforting resolutions, of the most  
pressing soul-exercises accompanying such as seriously set  
about these so much soul-concerning duties, of sins mor-  
tification and spiritual contentment under every lot. That  
thou may read with that same affection that the holy  
Author preached, and reap the same blessing which was  
with much prayer wrestled for by him to his hearers,  
wherein he was not unheard, is the earnest prayer of his  
soul to God, who is.

Thy servant in the Gospel of our dearest  
Lord and Savior.

A. S.

# THE SPIRITUAL WARFARE.

## SERMON I.

Rom. 7. 24. *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*



When the sword of the justice of God was coming down upon us, then our blessed Lord *Jesus*, in the infinite depth of his unsearchable love & compassion to self-destroying sinners, cryed forth with a loud voice, that justice might hold the hand: And as that ram sacrificed for *Isaac*, so was he willingly content to be caught in a thicket, and to become a spotlesse and everlasting sacrifice for sinners. He was content to be bruised, that so we might passe free, and his Fathers hand might be turned upon the little ones. But, notwithstanding *he hath died for our sins, and risen for our righteousness*, yet hath he given to all his followers a spiritual warfare to accomplish, so that they should be continually taken up in contending against principalities and powers, and spiritual wickednesses in high places; or, as the words are rendered by some, we conceive more appositely, in heavenly things. And certainly, their

there is no discharge in this war, neither any interruption while we are on this side of Eternity : We confesse, God might easily have served an Inhibition on all our spiritual enemies, that they should no more oppose themselves against a believer after Justification, but He in the depth of his unsearchable wisdom, and we may say likewise, infinit love towards his own, hath so contrived their way to heaven, that thorow many afflictions and tribulations in our spiritual warfare, we must enter there ? It is much indeed for a Christian to die a victor after war, though not a triumpher ; that must come after death, and the trophies and rewards of our victory, shall then be fully given to us, when our feet shall stand within the gates of the new *Jerusalem*, and when we shall receive these two glorious and everlasting badges of our victory, *a crown set upon our head*, having this written upon it, *It endureth for ever*. A motto which could never be engraven upon and Crown here below ; and *a Palm put in our hands* ; and then indeed shall we sing, as those that divide the spoil, when we have led captivity captive, and sitten down upon a Throne which is established for ever. And we conceive, much divine reflection and holy contemplation upon that precious recompence of reward, and that high and unconceivable pitch of dignity unto which believers and overcomers are to be advanced, would make us with much cheerfulness and alacrity undergo this spiritual warfare. And yet all our triumphing is not suspended, till our war be ended ; believe me, there is more real joy in the victory and vanquishing of one lust, yea



yea more divine satisfaction, in a serious pursute and contending with them, though with very small successe to our apprehension, than in the actuall enjoyment and fruition of all thy lusts. Thou mayest hide sin under thy tongue, and have it pleasant to thy taste, yet at last it shall be as the gall of asps, and the poison of dragons. O! put on so much holy generosity and spiritual ambition, that though Satan should offer unto them all the Kingdoms of the world, that thou mayest fall down and worship him, thou mayest cry forth in holy zeal and indignation, *Get thee behind me Satan*; O! that deceitfull oratory and malicious guile wherewith he ensnareth immortal souls, and brings them into subjection. O! but the depths of Satan are subtile & great; And he is a man of understanding that can them draw out, & not be ignorant of his devices; and except we be helped by the candle of the Lord that discovereth the inward parts of the belly, to know these mysterious subtilties of him, whose name is *A deceiver*, they will remain still riddles and mysteries to us.

But since we are compassed about *with this body of death*, and *there is a law in our members rebelling against the law of our minde*, We should be much in groaning for the day of our redemption, when the lawfull captive may be delivered, and the prey taken from the mighty, and that blessed decree may come forth, *O prisoners of hope, go forth and shew your selves*. We are afraid that the Christians of this generation, have proclaimed a cessation of armes, and have concluded a treaty of peace with their lusts, and a league not only offensive, but (shall I

adde

and adde this ) even defensive ; not only, that we shall  
 offend our lusts, but shall defend them : and if once  
 we have sealed this treaty and agreement with our  
 Idols , what can they require more at our hands ?  
 We conceive, we may sadly allude unto that word,  
 that there is not one amongst fourty thousand in  
 Israel , with whom there is a spear and sheild seen  
 in contending in this holy warfare. O ! can such a  
 delusion as this overtake you, that ye can be an over-  
 comer without fighting ; is your strength greater  
 then those that have gone before you , that you  
 think you can accomplish this war in one day, and  
 pursue your enemies till ye overtake and consume  
 them ? O ! when shall that day be, when we shall  
 be groaning forth dayly this mournfull ditty ,  
*O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this  
 body of death.*

In the words we conceive first, there is a sweet  
 and pleasant emphasis in that word ( *me* ) speaking  
 so much, that if infinite power and grace were cap-  
 able of any limitation , and there could be any  
 bounds fixed to it , *Paul* did conceive he was the  
 bounds and limits of infinite power and grace ; if  
 there were an impossibility for grace to save any  
 sinner , it should be impossible for grace to have  
 saved him who was the *chiefest of sinners* , and *lesse*  
*then the least of all Saints*. And if each Christian did  
 look upon himself as the greatest debtor to the  
 Justice of God , his debt to the infinite grace of  
 God should appear more singular.

Secondly , we may perceive , that a Christians  
 happinesse , doth consist in a sweet exchange of  
 dominion

dominion and governments : Once sin doth reign in *his mortal body* , and he is under the dominion of *his lusts* , but then grace doth step in , and *exauctorats* and dethrones the former King , and *doth reign* in the temple of our heart. This is clear, *Rom. 5.* last , and that is a remarkable word which *is there, that grace may reign* , the word in the original doth signifie so much , *that grace may play the King, βασιλευ'σει* , and this fulnesse of graces dominion, is that, the Apostle would be at here. And certainly , there is no repentance of this exchange of Masters : There is much noise and rumour of complaints amongst people in these dayes of the exchange of governments, from one species of government to another , we shall leave these debates unto men who desire to exercise their spirits about them : but sure we are of this , that those who are given up to this change , shall have it passe as most legitimat and lawfull, by the divine approbation , both of angels , and of the souls of just men now made perfect.

Thirdly , the way that *Paul* taketh here to propose his complaint under the strong prevalency of the body of death, by way of question *who shall deliver me ?* doth not import any hesitation about his perswasion of certainty, that he at last should sing a song of triumph over his lusts ; but only that it would be among the richest and the most singular monuments and trophies of the victorie of *Christ*, to save him. *Paul* did ( no doubt ) conceive that amongst all the royall monuments of *Christs* conquest, that should be, as it were, hanged about the walls



in walls of that higher and glorious palace, *Paul* should  
 once put in the highest place, as having least merit  
 and to bring him there, ( if there could be any merit  
 and at a'l ) and most love and grace.

Now to come more particularly to the words,  
 after *Paul* hath most divinely, set forth that woful  
 opposition and contradiction, that was betwixt the  
 unrenewed part and the renewed, and what strong  
 dominion sin had over him, he doth in these words  
 breath out a sweet desire to be delivered, not only  
 from his actual corruption, but from his original  
 guilt, which here he calleth *the body of this death*,  
 not only because corruption is a thing which may  
 be easily discerned and known to us, it being ( so  
 to speak ) a thing which may fall under the object  
 of our sight, being no spirit but a body; but also  
 because of these great multitudes of corruptions  
 that flow from that root of original sin, it having  
 so many different members and parts which are so  
 diversified and so compleat, that they may make up  
 a body, which body if it be intertaind, shall cer-  
 tainly bring and occasion death. So when he is un-  
 der the strong convictions of his guilt, and hath had  
 a compleat discovery of himself, you may see his  
 exercise holden forth in these words, *O wretched*  
*man*, the word in the original *ταλαίπωρος*, signi-  
 fieth one that is wearied with troublesome and con-  
 tinual combats, with little apparent successe, and  
 this doth certainly import that he was a man, much  
 and continually taken up in wrestling against his  
 corruptions, and endeavouring to bring them unto  
 subjection unto the obedience of *Christ Jesus*.

And

And ye may see likewayes in these words , the way that *Paul* took to overcome his lusts , he was much in the exercise of prayer ; for the words that we have read are indeed a short and pathetick prayer. I conceive that word which is recorded in *Iſa.* 38. 14. *O Lord, I am oppressed, undertake for me,* is a sweet paraphrase upon these words.

Fourthly , You may see his great and principal suit to have been, *deliverance from this body of death* : this captive exile was hastning to be delivered, and looking out at the windowes of his Prison-house, waiting till the Jaylor should come and open the doors , and take his chains and fetters from off his feet. We confesse these shall not be fully taken off, till we shall be passing thorow the door of our everlasting rest, and then that woful and sad complaint shall take his everlasting adiew and farewell ; for if we may speak so , the burial place of sin is before the door of our eternal rest , it then ceaseth to be, when we begin more eminently to have a beeing ; But may we not be ashamed and blush, that we are not more in uttering those inexpressible sighs and groans of the spirit, under the conviction of our sinfulness, since this holy man , who had, no doubt, attained unto a great length in mortification , who had *plucked out many right eyes, and cut off many right hands,* and oft-times returned victor after war, was so much in groaning under his corruption. O ! but we have inverted strangely the way to heaven ! I conceive practical Antinomianisme is an Epidemick error in these dayes : Many think that it is below a regenerate man to mourn, and to sit down and lament

over

### *Spiritual warfare.*

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the over the body of death ; we know not what it is  
was to make our bed to swim with tears, and to be bedew.  
that ing the way to Zion, when our faces are thither ward ;  
ick ye conceive that it is a lesson to be practised , and  
in learned by those in a lower classe , and those who  
me, are learning ( so to speak ) the Rudiments of  
Christianity, and not to be exercised by those, who  
are now advanced unto the high classe of Christiani-  
ty , that being, ( as it were in our apprehension )  
a degrading of your selves from that pitch of per-  
fection unto which in your imagination you have  
attained : but, believe me, it is a work not below  
the eldest Christian , nor above the youngest be-  
liever ; and the more one be old in reality in Re-  
ligion, this work wil alwayes be new in their prac-  
tice. I shall only give you that divine counsel of a  
holy man, who desired Christians to set about the  
mortification of their lusts, as though they had never  
been taken up in that duty before ; each day to set  
about to mortifie , not as a proficient, but as a be-  
ginner, who hath never made any progresse in that  
blessed work.

Now in speaking upon *Pauls* exercise, which is  
here holden forth, that he was continually exercised  
in wrestling against those corruptions, and that  
body of death that was in him ; we need not stand  
long to prove that it is the duty of a Christian to  
be so exercised and taken up ; there is somewhat  
of that implied in that word, *Acts* 24. 16. And it  
is more clearly pressed, *Col* 3. 5. *Eph* 6. 13. and,  
*1 Cor* 5. 7. And, no doubt, if a Christian did reflect  
more upon the nature of sin , and consider that by  
it,



it, difformity with God is increased, and precious conformity with him lost; and, did we take up sin in its wofull effects, that it worketh death, and involveth us under the curse of *a living God*, we would be more constant in this spiritual warfare. O! but Christians thorow want of the apprehension of these, are much disenabled to *stand fast to that liberty wherewith Christ hath made them free, and oft-times entangled themselves again with the yoke of bondage*: So that I conceive if God were coming to give a name to the Christians of this generation, he might call us, *Issachar*, because we do now crouch down under two burdens, and are become servants unto tribute; and even those that are more refined and tender in their walk in those dayes, he might call them *Reuben*, because they are unstable as water, which marreth their excellency.

But that which first we shall speak to is, how the wrestlings of a natural man against the body of death, and those corruptions that are within him, may be distinguished from the wrestlings of one that is really godly.

And first we conceive, that it is without debate and controversie, that a man altogether unregenerate, by natures light may be put on to mortifie (if so we may speak) and contradict those sins, which are most sensual and grosse; natures light including an antipathy and detestation of those things within it self; though we confesse, thorow the depravement of our nature, those sins, which fall under the sphere of natures mortification, are now abridged unto a small sum, it being not now refined and clear, as it was when man was in the estate of innocence.

Secondly,

Secondly, another sort may, from some common qualification, oppose some sins, as those that are of more herōick and refined spirits, will have detestation against covetousnesse and other sins of that nature, and so in some sense may endeavour the mortification of these things.

Thirdly, the same may a natural man do by such a conviction of the holy Ghost, as is but a common work of the spirit, he may be put on to mortifie these sins that are more visible, and somewhat grosse in their nature, as is clear from the practice of those who cleanse the outside of the platter, and studies to have an outward conformity unto the law of God, notwithstanding of that inward and secret antipathy, against the strictnesse of his law; yea more, a natural man who hath some predominant evil, may endeavour and will attempt to wrestle against that sin, which is in a direct line of opposition against it; as one that is given to that vice of covetousnesse, he will study to mortifie that vice of prodigality, those being two opposit vices. Now from all these we may conclude, that upon every opposition which we use against our corruptions: it is not safe to infer, that we are really ingaged in this spiritual warfare; it being, we think another thing then the most part of us do imagine it to be: And we confesse, it is a difficulty even to attain that length of endeavour in mortification, which the natural man by these things which we have spoken may attain to. But for the difference betwixt their debates, the first is this; that a natural and unregenerat man, doth mainly wrestle against these sins, that are outward and more grosse, and not so much

much against those sins that are inward , and falls not under the eye of man : we do not deny but a natural man may wrestle against vain thoughts, and have some small opposition, against the stirring of corruption within his own bosome , but we conceive , that there are these two secret sins which a natural man is not at all taken up in wrestling against, at least very little, *viz.* his *original corruption*, and his *unbelief* ; whereas one that is really godly, is much taken up in bearing down these. *Paul* is here taken up in wrestling against his original sin ; and *David*, *Psal.* 51. 5. compared with *ver.* 2. and 7. is likewise taken up in wrestling against it ; and that good man that is recorded in the Gospel, who cryed forth , *Lord I believe, help my unbelief* , was much taken up in wrestling against his unbelief ; and, *David*, *Psal.* 77. from the beginning to the 10. verse and forward : and certainly , one that never was taken up in wrestling against those two ( at least in some small measure and degree ) he may hesitate much whether or not he was ever seriously engaged in this holy warfare. O ! but if many that palle under the notion of Professors were posed, when they did enter into the lists with original corruption, there are many who without breach of truth might say , they never knew what it was to contend against it : And this certainly speaks forth much of our ignorance of original guilt ; And believe me, there is more difformity unto the Image of God in original sin , then in a thousand actual outbreakings : And it is but in vain for a Christian to attempt the mortification and cutting off branches, till once he study to pluck up the root , which doth bear *wormwood and gall.* A



A second difference is this, a natural man wrestleth against his corruptions, rather because they bring him under the stroak of the justice of God, than because they are contrary to the holiness of God: Hence is it that the most part of a natural mans wrestling is, when he is under affliction; somewhat of which is pointed out, *Psal. 78.34.35.* Now this difference is clear in *Joseph* and *Paul*, who made the holiness of God, the great topicks and common place whence they did produce all their arguments for contradicting sin, as *Paul* in this Chapter, and *Joseph* in that precious sentence, *shall I do this, and sin against God?* but *Cain*, who was a man cut off from the right hand of the Lord, had another principle of contradicting and wrestling against his lusts, *My punishment is greater then I can bear*, *Gen. 4. 13.* And hence is it that a natural man doth never oppose sin, as it is a cause to interrupt fellowship and communion with God, or from that divine principle of Christs love constraining him: O! but the principle of a natural man wrestling against corruption, be selfish and low! and if there were not a hell, and a place of torment, natural men would take a latitude to themselves not to mortifie sin. But sure it argueth a divine and heroick spirit, and plausible to them, *who have Christ in them their hope of glory*, that though there were neither any regard or remuneration of their obedience, neither any punishment of their disobedience, yet simple desire to please God, and not to profane his holiness which he loveth, doth tye them to obedience. I may confidently say, that these who never knew what it was to have that threefold cord, and that precious

precious triple chain, binding them to obedience, and inducing them to mortifie their lusts, to wit, *the holinesse of God, the fear to interrupt communion and fellowship with him, and the love of Christ*, they may question whether or not ever they were seriously engaged in this holy warfare: But withall we do not deny, but the fear of punishment is likewise a most divine principle of mortification, in its own place; but except there be somewhat higher, it is not to build upon.

The third difference is this, that a natural man studieth more to restrain sin, then to mortifie it; for he is a man that resteth satisfied with the restraint of the actings of sin, though there be, no mortification of that vicious inclination which is in the man: this is clear in *Haman* Esth. 3. 5. in *Saul*, 1 Sam. 24. 16. 17. and following verses compared with, 1 Sam. 26. 2. and in the Scribes and Pharisees, *Matth.* 23. 25. But, the mortification that the heart requireth, is of a higher nature, *Gal.* 5. 24. where we are commanded *to crucifie the flesh with the affections and lusts*; not only to restrain the acts but to mortifie the habits: we confesse it is a difficulty to determine the difference betwixt the restraint of sin, and mortifying of sin, and this maketh it the more difficult, that sins which are really mortified, sometimes a Christian may be overtaken to commit, which I conceive seldome or never holds of sins that are more gross, but holds oft-times of sins that are of a lower nature and degree. Yet these things may a little point forth the difference, first, a Christian who hath sin mortified, is filled with much divine joy and satisfaction in the mortifying

fyng of it, which we conceive partly doth proceed from this, that a Christian, when he is honoured to mortifie a lust, he ordinarily then receives the intimation of his peace and interest in God, in a more lively and spiritual way. And, secondly, because at that time also he doth receive much precious and sweet communion with God, his soul then is in life; somewhat of this is pointed out to us, *Rom.* 8. 13. and, *Rom.* 7. 24. compared with vers. 25. Thirdly, the difference may be known by this, that when a man hath been much in the exercise of fasting and prayer for the mortifying of such a lust and idol, and hath not attained to this with great facility, there is great appearance that upon the desisting of tentation, and the actings of his spirit to commit such a thing, such a lust is mortified, and not restrained only; there is somewhat of this pointed forth, *Matth.* 17. 20, 21. where it is said, that power of casting out of devils goeth not forth but by fasting and prayer. We conceive the place is principally to be understood concerning the faith of miracles, though by proportion and analogy it may hold of sanctifying faith: O! our lusts in these dayes do rather go out, then are cast out; they rather die to us then we to them. Fourthly, the frame of spirit which we have after mortifying of a lust, may let us see whether it be a real work, or only some restraint for a time; a man that doth attain such a length, as really to mortifie and crucifie any lust, is much taken up in the exercise of praise, *Rom.* 7. 25. *1 Cor.* 15. 55, 56, 57. he is under conviction of his duty to blesse the Lord though he is also convinced of an impossibility of blessing him



him as he ought to be : but we think , when lusts are restrained only , and not mortified , the man is not so much taken up in the exercise of praise. O ! what heavenly Elogies and Songs of praise have the Saints penned unto the unsearchable and omnipotent grace of *Christ* , when they have been enabled to overcome , and crucifie a lust , *Their souls have been enditing a good matter concerning the praises of the King , their tongue hath been as the pen of a ready writer .* And this may , lastly , point out the difference ; Sins that are mortified do not for the most part presently recur so , as to obtain victory over the Christian ; we confesse , Sathan , to weaken our confidence , may assault us with tentations to commit that iniquity , that so we may be brought to call in question our real and spiritual victory over it : but if lusts be only restrained , it cannot be long away from obtaining victory : this is clear from , *Esth. 4. 10.* compared with the following verses , as likewise from *1 Sam. 24. 16, 17. &c.* compared with *1 Sam. 26. 2.*

The fourth difference ; a natural man is not constant in his wrestling against his corruptions , but takes it by fits and starts , either when he is under affliction , or some other sad occurrence that doth befall him , or through some sharp and sudden conviction of a commonly enlightened conscience ; but he that is really taken up in this spiritual warfare , hath a constancy in maintaining of it , at least in his endeavours : this is clear from *Acts 28. 16.* and *Col. 3. 5.* and indeed that wofull inconstancy that we have in this spiritual warfare , doth evidence our little real engagment in the work. Are there not many

many here, who can interrupt the warfare many weeks, and yet not be much under either the discovery of their losse, or under any impression of sorrow because of it? Sure, if this were believed, that there may be more lost in one day, then can be gained in many, we would endeavour to be more constant. O! but grace is a tender thing, and we ought to keep it *as the apple of our eye*. Alace, there are but too many, who slacken their endeavour against sin, and will ly idle many dayes, and yet are ready to think, that when they please, they can shake themselves of their lusts as at other times; but to these we shall only say this, beware lest that dispensation once meet you, that when ye shall begin to shake your selves of your lusts and of your bands, your strength shall be gone from you, and then your enemies shall lead you captive, and put out your two eyes. O! but sometimes our corruptions get such advantage over us, that we may say, *Video meliora proboque, deteriora sequor*.

The fifth difference, they go not about this warfare from a right principle, which the Christian doth, the one wrestles in their own strength, but the other resting upon the strength of *Jehovah*, that *everlasting strength*, this is pointed at, *Rom. 8. 13.* there is a command, that a wrestling Christian studies alwayes to obey: a Christian uses much that precious divinity of *David*, *1 Sam. 17. 45, 46.* when they go to war. And alace there are many that are living under the apprehension of this warfare, who in the day of their accompts, we fear shall be found never really to have entered in the lists with *principalities and powers and spiritual wickednesse*. And  
it

it is no wonder that many of us be foiled by the hand of our iniquities, we not having sitten down first when we engaged, to consult, whether we with our ten thousand, were able to meet him that came against us with his twenty thousand, we engaged without the apprehension of difficulty, and so no wonder we be overcome without much difficulty. Now examine your selves by these, whether indeed you be engaged in this spiritual warfare.

Now, that which, secondly, we shall speak to, shall be, to those advantages that a Christian may have by being continually taken up in the spiritual warfare. The first advantage is this, it is an excellent way to obtain victory over these lusts and Idols, wherewith we are beset: we conceive it is no wonder that this be the great and general complaint of Christians in these dayes, that they are led captive by the hand of their iniquities, and that the voice and noise of the spoiler is so much heard with them, because they are not taken up in a constant debating and contending with sin; there is somewhat of this pointed out to us, *Rev. 3. 5.* where though that promise be principally understood of the reward of an overcomer, when he shall be above, that *he shall be clothed in white*, yet we think it may include this, that a man that is in the way, and constant exercise of overcoming, shall attain to much divine conformity with God, and much divine disformity with the world: and to those who are much discouraged with their little successe and apparent victory in this war, notwithstanding of their constancy in debate with their lusts, we shall only speak that for their comfort

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by way of allusion, which is Dan. 7. 12. *Their dominion shall be taken from them, but their lives be prolonged for a season and time*: the dominion of your lusts shall be taken away, though their lives may be prolonged for your exercise and dependence on him for a short time and season: ye may have tribulation in this spiritual warfare *ten dayes*, but be convinced of this that the day is coming, when ye shall sit down upon a Throne, after ye have overcome, as *Christ* also did sit down, after he had overcome; once ye shall stand and defend the field when all your lusts shall flee as chaff before the wind: albeit oftentimes our discouragement speaks that word which *Saul* spake to *David*, 1 Sam. 17. 33. ( when we are to wrestle with the devil ) *thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth*: yet a Christian ought to answer, *through God I shall do valiantly*.

Secondly, it is the way to attain much divine consolation, as is clear, Rev. 2. 17. *To him that overcometh will I give to eat the hidden Manna*, which is ( as we conceive ) in part, he shall have of the consolations of the holy Ghost, though it be principally understood of *Jesus Christ*. O! what a divine contentment and unspeakable solace of mind doth a Christian attain by intertaining a constant enmity against his lusts. I am perswaded, that that which doth interrupt a Christians peace much, is the interruption of that holy and divine enmity, which we ought to have against sin; believe me, there is more real satisfaction to be found in one dayes serious debate against sin, then in having an eternity

eternity of enjoyment of the most flourishing pleasures in the world: ye *may sow in tears* in this warfare, but *ye shall only reap in joy*: the first part may be true of the men of the world, in their pursuits after their pleasures, they do sow in tears; but it was never yet heard nor left upon record, that they did reap in joy; there was alwayes a correspondence betwixt their seed-time, and their harvest; but there is a divine transmutation and disproportion betwixt the seed-time of a Christian and his harvest, unspeakable joy can spring off the root of their most bitter sorrows.

Thirdly, it is an excellent way to maintain the faith of our interest in God, this is clear from *Rev. 2. 17.* where *Christ* giveth this promise to the overcomers, that he will give them *a new name*, which holdeth forth their adoption and interest in him, which no man can know, but he that receiveth it; and certainly there is nothing that over-clouds a Christians hope so much, nor darkneth his interest, as an intermission in this holy warfare. Yea more particularly he attaineth to the most certain perswasion of his victory over his corruptions: there is somewhat of this pointed out, *2 Tim. 7. 8.* *I have fought the good fight of faith*, and hence he doth infer, that there is laid up for him *a crown of righteousness*, which doth certainly import and include in its bosome, that *Paul* upon his constant endeavour to wrestle against corruption, did attain to much certainty of overcoming. I think it is altogether impossible for a Christian, intermitting this holy warfare, to intertain any divine or assured perswasion, that there is a blessed issue and period unto his

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his warfare. And we think it is from this, that oftentimes his own cry out, *who can stand before the children of Anak.* and do conclude to make to themselves a Captain, and go back unto Egypt: though we think, that if we were constant in this, we would be taught, not only to intertain a holy undervaluing of them, but likewayes a divine certainty of overcoming. I think a Christian hath not only that advantage by being constant in this warfare, that he is brought to an assured perswasion that he shall overcome, but likewise doth most sweetly conclude, that the strength of their corruption is gone, therefore they may go up and war with them.

Fourthly, by maintaining this warfare, a Christian gets much experience; by it he attains to much distinct apprehension of the deceitfulnesse of him, who is *the deceiver of the brethren.* We are perswaded, that these who are constant in this warfare, can speak most to those singular subtilties of Sathan, and can most distinctly fathom these deep devices of his; as likewayes, they can most take up the unsearchable deceitfulnesse of their own heart, and there is, no doubt, no small advantage in the taking up of these two, both that we may be provoked unto self-diffidence, as likewayes to have our confidence and hope much reposed upon *Jesus Christ*, who is *the Captain of our salvation*, that we may be constrained in that day when the blast of the terrible one, is as a blast against the wall, and when the archer doth shoot at us, and grievously wound us, to go unto him, whose name is *an everlasting strength*, that so by his strength we may be enabled to overcome.



That which thirdly we shall speak to, shall be, what is the reason Christians do obtain so small victory in this spiritual warfare: and in this, we shall not only speak to these morall and culpable causes, why Christians do not obtain much victory, but we shall likewayes speak a little, to these divine and precious ends that God hath in denying victory to his own, who in some small measure are entertaining a constant enmity against their corruption. And as for the first, it doth proceed from too much self-conceit and presumptuous opinion of their own strength; I am perswaded, that that which made *Peter* so uncapable to resist the tentations of denying *Christ*, did much proceed from that word which is *Matth. 26. 33. Though all men should be offended because of him, yet he would never be offended.* Therefore we think, that the first and most excellent way to obtain victory is, to be dwelling under the apprehensions of our own weaknesse to overcome, that holy and divine paradox being alwayes made true, that *when we are weak, then are we strong*: and we may enter into the lists with our corruptions, having no confidence in the flesh but desiring In the name of the *God of Israel* to wrestle with the strongest *Goliath* that we meet with. O! but humility is a most sweet and strong armour, wherewith a Christian ought to be clothed, when he goeth to war: he must walk in that holy fear, which may be consistent with faith, and entertain so much faith, and spiritual confidence, as may not altogether cut off holy fear.

There is a second cause, which is, too much intanglement with the pleasures, and affairs of the world

world : It is impossible for one who is taken up in the continual noise and buz of things here below, to be an overcomer ; hence *Paul* presseth, *2 Tim.* 2. 4. that *no man that warreth ought to intangle himself with the affairs of this life , that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a souldier ; and that word , 1 Cor. 9. 25. He that striveth for the mastery must be temperate in all things.* O ! oft-times through the deceitfulnesse of the world and pleasures thereof, we are led captive by the hand of our iniquities, and do fall before our enemies. I know nothing so suitable and helpful for a Christian to overcome, then to be denyed to these three cardinal and fundamental temptations , by which *Sathan* standeth to allure us, which are *the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life ;* that our eye may not take in , any sweet or pleasant representations of the transient vanities of the world, neither may our sensual appetite be taken with the taste of these bitter and most soure delights , neither may be ambitious in the enjoyment , and actual possession of them.

There is a third cause , which is , that we are not taken up in the exercise of watchfulnesse : this is certain that the exercise of this grace, hath most divine influence for the overcoming of our corruptions, as is clear from *Matth. 26. 41.* and *Mark. 14. 28.* That ought to be the great Motto of a Christian souldier , which ought to be engraven upon his armes , *Watch :* Watchfulnesse is not only effectual for overcoming in this respect, that it doth discover unto us our temptations , when they begin to assail us, but likewise it takes up both the subtilty

and strength of our temptations, as likewise it taketh up the weakness and inability in the Christian to resist that temptation: and if those three be attained, seldom or never is a Christian much foiled by the hand of his iniquities, therefore that which I would say to a Christian souldier, I would say unto all, *Watch.*

There is a fourth cause, which is, that we are not much taken up in the exercise of secret prayer, prayer being indeed that noble and spiritual weapon by which Christians do overcome, as is clear from *Matth. 26. 41.* and *2 Cor. 12. 7.* where *Paul*, when a messenger of *satan* was buffeting him, was constrained to beseech the Lord thrice, a practice much unknown by the most part of Christians, who know not what it is to pray without ceasing, when they are tempted much without interruption. I think of all the weapons that almost a Christian taketh to resist temptation, this is the most effectual; for when *Sathan* seeth that a Christian improves the temptation so much for his own advantage, as to make it an errand to go to God, then he desists and gives over to contend: I confesse a Christian may in so far glory in his infirmities, as they give him an occasion to converse more frequently with God, O! but had we spent more of our time in conversing with God, when we were alone, we might have attained many sweet trophies, and fruits of our victory, which now we have only in hope and expectation.

There is a fifth cause, which is, that we are not much taken up in the exercise of Faith, which is that general peace of armour that *Paul* doth prescribe



prescribe unto the Christian, *Eph. 6. 16.* Above all things, taking the shield of faith, whereby ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked: there is that sweet note of commendation put upon this armour, that there is no temptation a Christian can meet with, but through the exercise of Faith, he may be able to overcome it: hence *Paul* saith, ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the Devil: This peece of armour is not only defensive, but we may say, in some measure, it is offensive likewayes: now Faith helps a Christian to overcome his temptations and corruptions, wherewith he is assaulted, not only by laying hold on the infinite strength of him who is the *Captain of Salvation*; but likewayes, Faith is that grace which hath the most subtile and divine eye in taking up the strength of corruption: O! but a man much in the exercise of Faith, is a man that can passe a most accurat sentence upon his lusts and Idols wherewith he doth encounter: there is nothing impossible to the believing man: and I think, if there be any grace by which a Christian doth ascend most to a divine similitude unto the omnipotency of *God*, it is by the grace of Faith: hereby is the Christians power most intended. O! but Faith will make those that are weak, strong: Therefore we would desire you to be exercising your confidence upon him, who is that *munition of rocks*, that so through him ye may overcome, as likewayes through the word of your testimony.

This lastly may be a cause, that after some small victory over our lusts, we are ordinarily entangled with security, not knowing what it is to make the

victory over one lust, a sweet provocation to the overcoming of another. I think ( if we may allude unto that word which is, *Psal. 18. 37.* ) it ought much to be the practice of a Christian, *to pursue his enemies till he overtake them, and never to return again till they be consumed*, that by the strength of him who is *Jehovah*, we may run thorow a troupe, and by our God we may leap over a wall. O! but constant exercise in this war, never proclaiming a cessation of armes, would make a speedy riddance of all our adversaries; he then should teach our hands to warre, and by our armes a bow of steel might be broken. I think that which made David so little successfull over his lusts after some small victory, was his security: as likewayes in Peter. There is no discharge in this war till death, and then we shall receive our everlasting arriers for all our toil.

Now to the second, those divine ends that the Lord hath in this, why Christians do not attain victory over their lusts, though in some smal measure endeavouring constancy in war; it doth either proceed from this, that God knowes that we can better improve a wrestling estate than an overcoming estate, while we are here below; we can better dispense with war, than we can with victory. Therefore, while we are traveling thorow this wilderness, he doth still keep us in exercise with serpents and scorpions: or it doth much proceed from this, that we may be kept in a constant dependence upon God, and may intertain a holy and constant correspondence with him: It is certain, that if we were not constrained to walk with God, through principle of necessity, seldom would we walk with him

him through a principle of Duty, or from a principle of love: for it is obvious to a Christian upon his secret search, that we walk most with *God*, when we stand most in need of him: It doth likewise proceed from this, that we may be kept humble while we are here below, and that we may not be exalted above measure; as also, that the grace and power of our *blessed Lord Jesus*, in helping us to overcome, may be rendered more conspicuous and evident, this being the great stage in which *Christ's* power doth most eminently act and appear over our weaknesse, and the apprehensions of these insuperable difficulties, wherewith we are beset and oft overcome.

Now to shut up our discourse, we shall desire, that once ye may give up your names unto *Jesus Christ*, to fight under his royal banner, and believe me, though your corruptions were never so strong, yet at last he shall overcome them, the certainty whereof is made out unto you by this, that your *blessed head*, hath led captivity captive, and is now exalted at the right hand of Majesty on high: and the hope and expectation of that blessed issue may make you rejoyce *with joy unspeakable and full of glory.*

## S E R M O N I I.

Gal. 5. 24. *And they that are Christs have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.*

**O**! When shall that great and excellent wonder be seen in heaven, which *John* did see, *Rev. 12. 1. 6.* to behold the invisible Church, and those that are expectants of heaven, which is that



woman clothed and adorned with that spotlesse mo  
 and beautifull righteousness of a crucified Saviour. An  
 which is pointed out, by her being clothed with ha  
 the Sun, and to be regulat by the Doctrine of the the  
 twelve Apostles, which are indeed those precious the  
 Stars that will bring us unto the place where *Christ* a l  
 lies, and will sweetly conduct us unto him; and the  
 withall to have that great Idol under our feet, *the on*  
*world*, the divine emblem of which is the Moon, ny  
 because it is subject to many vicissitudes and chan- we  
 ges, and hath most different and contrary aspects. Ch  
 though we conceive, that if many Christians were of  
 to be printed, we might fix the Moon upon their im  
 head, for they use not the world as their servant, it v  
 but as their Master; Mortification is an exercise in  
 that doth not sute with flesh and blood, it is a hard y  
 saying to a man settled upon the dregs of nature, ou  
 and yet incorporate in that old stock: O! but it is ou  
 sad Divinity to many, that except one die with co  
 Christ, he cannot reign with him, we must wir un  
 to the fellowship of his sufferings, and be conform- wh  
 able with his death, before we attain to the resur- bea  
 rection from the dead: we love to divide those vi  
 things that *God* hath conjoyned, to take *Christ* for tea  
 righteousness and salvation, but not for a King and An  
 for sanctification: And if it was an evidence unto  
 wise *Solomon*, that she was not the mother of the occ  
 childe, who pleaded for the division of it, so it may no  
 be supposed, that he who will not take whole me  
*Christ*, but would have him divided, is not one that  
 is predestinated to the adoption of children: w  
 confesse there are many that love Christs coat, rather  
 than his graces, and if they pursue after those, it is  
 more

more after those graces that are adornig then saying:  
 And we conceive that there are these three graces  
 that a hypocrite doth most pursue after; there is  
 the grace of prayer, the grace of knowledge, and  
 the grace of humility, and of the last we may say,  
 a hypocrite may endeavour to person at it, but  
 there is alwayes within his bosome some convicti-  
 ons of his little attainment: it is impossible for a  
 hypocrite to think himself nothing; and, O! that  
 we could once attain to that precious length of  
 Christianity, as to be entertaining a holy oblivion  
 of our attainments, and a sanctified memory of our  
 imperfections; that the former may be written, as  
 it were in the sand, and the latter might be engraven  
 in the fleshy tables of our heart, and kept constant-  
 ly upon record: we confess there is not much of  
 our leaf that withers in these dayes, but much of  
 our fruit withers, and decays: O! is not man be-  
 come so brutish and ignorant, that he may be sent  
 unto the beasts of the field to be instructed of that  
 which is his duty: *Solomon* makes mention of four  
 beasts upon the earth which are little and exceeding  
 wise, *Prov.* 30. 24, 25, 26, 27, 28. all which may  
 teach us some spiritual doctrine; first there are the  
 ants, who may teach us that grace of divine pruden-  
 ce, and Christian policy, in laying hold on our  
 occasions and opportunities, who though they be  
 not a strong people, yet provide their meat in sum-  
 mer; and no doubt, we should be fighting with our  
 spiritual enemies, while it is the day, for the night  
 is cometh wherein no man can fight: actions done in  
 the season, addes a great deal of luster and perfection  
 to them, every thing being beautifull in its season.

Secondly, there are the conies, who may teach us that grace of denial, to distrust our own strength, and in the day of straits to run unto him who is that *Munition of rocks*, when the blast of the terrible one, is as a storm against a wall; for they being a feeble people, make their houses in the rocks; And no doubt, Atheisme and Idolatrie are the two great impediments of mortification, too much confidence in our selves, which is Idolatrie, and our too much diffidence in God, which is our Atheisme. Moreover, we may go to the locusts, which would teach us that primitive grace of unity, who though they want a King, yet go forth by bands: and lastly, we may go to the spider, which may teach us that grace of spiritual mindednesse, and of aspiring after those sublime and excellent things of God, for they are in Kings palaces: and, O! to be more conversant with heaven, and those things that are above: this would make us to distaste these lower springs, and they would be to us as the waters of Marah.

But to come more particularly to the words, you have many precious things concerning Mortification holden forth, which is that precious and cardinal grace of which we intend at this time to speak; you have the infinit advantage of this grace held forth, to wit, that such do meet with divine intimation of their interest in Christ, and that they are Christs, which is indeed the high elevation of a Christian: And this is clear from the words, that such an one may from this gather, that his name was written in the ancient and precious records of heaven: And, no doubt, little divine wrestling with our corruptions, makes us to have the extract of



our peace so often withdrawn to our sense : there is this held forth concerning it, the extensive nature of mortification, that a Christian ought not only to mortifie the flesh, which is original sin, which is so called, not only because of that wofull knot of amity and affection that is betwixt us and our lusts, hence that word, *no man ever hated his own flesh* ; O ! those invisible knots of union that are betwixt us and our lusts ; but it is so called, because sin hath contaminat the whole man, so that *from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot*, there is nothing that is not defiled, as likewayes, because during our abode in those tents of mortality, we must have this wofull and sad companion, and there is an unchangeable and unalterable decree of heaven that during our time of Minority, we should have that bad associat ; but more, a Christian should mortifie his affections, which are his predominant lusts, to which our affections are so much joyned, and our soul doth so much go out after ; as also his lusts, which are the first motions and risings of corruption within one, and withall may comprehend the eschewing the first shadows and appearance of evil, *Prov. 4. 14, 15. Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men, avoid it, passe not by it, turn from it, and passe away* : our mortification should be als much of our invisible Idols, as our visible lusts.

There is this likewayes held forth, the difficulty and painfullnesse of this work under this notion of *Crucifying*, which was one of the most painfull deaths : we conceive, that there are many who are of that mans humour, who wallowing upon the  
grasse,

grasse, cryed forth, *utinam hoc esset laborare*: there is, no doubt, more difficulty in this then we apprehend, we must not ly in the bed of ease, if we intend to be mortifying Christians, we must wrestle as princes with God, till we prevail; the longsom-  
 nesse of this work is also pointed at, under the notion of crucifying, it being a longsome death: we cannot ordinarily fight and triumph in one day; that ambitious letter of *Cesars* will not hold here, *Veni, Vidi, Vici*; we must die mortifying and struggling with our corruptions, and when one of our feet is within the borders of eternity to be sighing out that lamentation, *O wretched man that I am, &c.* You have also the intensive nature of mortification: that a Christian should be content with nothing but the death of his lusts, which is held forth in that word *crucifie*. O! to bind our self with a holy oath and vow, not to dwell in much contentment, till we have gotten the life of our predominant lust: we must not give our Idols quarter upon the most plausible and fairest termes of subjection, other-  
 wayes, if ye do, I shall not say that word which the Prophet spake to *Ahab*; that *your life shall go for his*; but sure I am that confederacy shall be broken, and likely not without many sorrows to your spirits. There is lastly, the certainty of this victory held forth in that word, *they have crucified*; it is here in the preterite time, as it were already accomplished and brought to passe; and no doubt, this may make us to rejoyce *with joy unspeakable and full of glory*, that once we shall have a triumphant song put in our mouth

Now before we shall speak unto any of these, we shall

shall speak to some few things as previous to be known: We shall not dwell long in pointing out the nature of Mortification; we conceive it thus, it is a divine quality of the immortal soul derived from the efficacy and vertue of *Christs* death, whereby the strength of sin is inpared, and its dominion taken away so that we should not totally nor with full consent yield our self unto that iron-yoke of our iniquity: Neither shall we stand long to prove that it is your duty to be much in the practice of this duty: It is clear not only from *Col. 3. 5. Mortifie therefore your members which are upon the earth*, but also from *1 Pet. 1. 15, 16.* and, *2 Cor. 7. 1.* it ought to be our great design and aim to bring all those things in subjection, which stand in opposition to *Jesus Christ*, and it is the noble prerogative of those young men, *1 John 2. 13, 14.* that they will have evercome that wicked one, and hath in some measure trodden Sathan under their feet.

But we shall speak a little unto this, first, whether or not a Christian can fall again to the committing of that sin which once they have mortified and repented for, and withall hath received an act of pardon? We conceive indeed (so far as we know) there can be no explicit proof given of such a case in scripture, that ever any of those that were heirs of the grace of life, did fall into that sin which they had once mortified and repented for: but however, we are confident to averre, that it is not inconsistent with a gracious estate, which we conceive is clear, not only from his names, but from his promises and from his commands; doth not that name, that he is *a healer of our back-slidings*, and



and the repairer of our breaches, and that name, he will multiply to pardon, speak out that a Saints relapsing into a mortified sin, doth not put him without hope, *Isa. 55. 7. Hos. 14. 4.* but what he may have confidence that he shall not die but live, and declare the wondrous works of the Lord, though God may speak that word to him, which *Absalom* spake to *Hushai*, *Is this thy kindnesse to thy friend*: and withall, do not his promises speak this, *Jer. 3. 22. I will heal your back-slidings*; and do not his commands speak it, *Jer. 3. 1, 12, 14, 22.* how often is back-sliding Israel exhorted to return, and he who imposed that commandement upon us, to forgive our brother untill seventy and seven times, is he return and repent, will not his bowels be moved within him, towards a back sliding heifer? But withall, to provoke you to beware of that sin, to sin after repentance and mortification, we shall propose these things. First, such a sin doth creat and beget much hardnesse and stupidity of heart, so that our own back-sliding do reprove us, and become not only our sin, but our punishment; and when God hath spoken peace to us, should we again turn to folly; Secondly, there is this to dissuade you, that such Apostacy as this, makes a Christian to losse the sense and comfortable assurance of their Interest, so that sometimes they will be even razing, as it were, the foundations: O! but back-sliders in heart are filled with the fruit of their own way, and are made to walk in darknesse and to have no light: it is much for a Christian to keep fast his hands, when after this manner, he hath lost his feet.

Fourthly, such an one doth ordinarily give much  
reins,

he reins, and much liberty to his corruptions ; that is indeed, their year of Jubilee and release, as is clear from *Jer. 5. 6.* where these two are joyned : and may not the nature and aggravating circumstances of that sin , make you to eschew it ? Is it not a sinning against light ? Is it not a sinning against God, after he hath appeared unto you twise ? So that this may be the manner of your bemoaning your self. If it had been an enemy that had thus done , O Lord thou mightest have born it, but that it should be one, whom thou didst condescend to make thy familiar , and to take sweet counsel together with, that hath lift up his heel against thee ; this no doubt is an iniquity of deep dye ; and we shall only say this , that it is imprinted upon the effigie of godly *Judah, Gen. 38. 26.* that after his first fall with *Tamar*, he *knew her again no more* : And, no doubt , it were your advantage to obey that counsel , *let him that standeth take heed lest he fall.*

Now that which secondly we would speak to is, to propose something to you , by which you may know your growth in Mortification, since there are many that delude themselves in this, supposing that their lusts are really mortified , when they are but sleeping and that they are really cast out, when they only go out for a season : those are they that are *pure in their own eyes , and yet are not cleansed from their iniquity.* And before we shall speak any thing to this, we would have you considering these things. First, that there may be a growth of leaves, where there is not much growth of fruit ; a plentiful measure of profession, and yet much barrenness in practice ; there are some whose leaf doth not wither,

wither, though their fruit doth much decay, who have many specious appearances, and yet cannot say that the root of the matter is with them; and with all we would say, that there may be some real growth to the fruit, when there is not much growth to the root, so that though we spread forth our branches, yet we do not cast forth our root as *Lebanon*; we grow sometimes more in prayer, and knowledge, and joy of the *Holy Ghost*, then in mortification and humility, though there be a promise for both their growthes, *Hos.* 14. 5, 6. Now there is this secondly, that we would have you knowing, that there is a divine necessity for Christians to grow somewhat in all the graces of the Spirit, and to bring forth fruits even in old age, to be advancing in Mortification, to be ascending up in a divine conformity with God, till we shall be made like unto him: we confesse indeed, there are some sad interruptions, when we almost forget that we were purged from our old sins; And this necessity of growth, appears not only from this, that *Christ* is the head of believers, and they his members; this similitude the Apostle useth twice to expresse Christians growth, *Eph.* 4. 15, 16. *Col.* 2. 10. and no doubt, since *Christ* is the head, and we the members, we must grow till there be a divine conformity and resemblance betwixt us and our head; and are not we predestinate unto this divine and noble end, *Rom.* 8. 29. and must not we purifie our selves, and endeavour to wash our selves from our spots, through that precious blood of sprinkling, that we may be holy, as he who hath called us, is holy. And more, this is one end of that fulnesse, which was communicate unto



who *Jesus Christ* our precious head, ever to make us com-  
 mune, *Col. 2. 9, 10.* And as his fulnesse is for our  
 and growth, so our growth is for the making up of his  
 fulnesse, *Eph. 1. 23.* Mystical *Christ* will not be com-  
 mune, till once all his Members grow up to the  
 stature of the fulnesse of *Jesus Christ*, and so from that,  
 there is such an invisable knot of union and super-  
 natural relation betwixt us and *Christ*, that a *Chri-*  
*stian* must grow, and if once the first draughts and  
 imperfect lineaments of *Christs* image be engraven  
 on our soul, he will bring it unto perfection, since  
 this is his noble prerogative, that his work is per-  
 fect. There is this also that speaks a necessity of a  
 Christians growth in mortification, and all the  
 graces of the spirit, that the faithfulness of all the  
 persons of the blessed Trinity, is engaged for this,  
 and is laid in pawn: it is clear that the faithfulness  
 of the first person of the blessed Trinity is laid in  
 pledge, from *Psal. 92. 14, 15.* they shall still bring  
 forth fruit in old age, to shew that the Lord is upright,  
 or faithfull: which we conceive doth relate to that  
 promise made by the Father to the Son, in that an-  
 cient and eternal transaction, *Isa. 53. 10.* And is  
 not the faithfulness of the Son laid in pledge, is not  
 this commandment of the Father laid upon him,  
 that of all that are given to him, he should losse none,  
 but raise them up at the last day, *John 6. 39, 40.* so  
 that as *Christ* must be answerable to his charge, he  
 must present all the gifted ones unto the Father,  
 which presupposeth their growth in grace, and their  
 being made meet for the inheritance of the Saints in  
 light: and is not the faithfulness of the third person  
 of the blessed Trinity likewayes engaged in this?

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in that it is his great work , to apply *Christs* purchase , to reveal unto us the whole mind of *God* living and to communicate all things that are needful for us to know , and to guide us in all truth, *Joh. 1* may 13. And if this be his work , will he not accomplish it, & bring it unto perfection ? all which grace you works that are committed unto the *Holy Ghost* to do : have that sweet and precious result, *groweth in grace* . There is this thirdly , that we would have you knowing, that there are some graces of the Spirit, whose growth, before we can judge, there must be a time allotted ; grace is not like the grasse of the *T* field , which groweth in a night, and perisheth in a night : it is a wofull practice among many , the begin to search their growth, before they have well begun to grow : we would rather counsel you to grow , then to search your growth ; though it is indeed a Christians duty to take notice , to go early to the vineyards, to see if the vine flourish, whether the tender grape appear, and the pomegranats bud forth : this is clear from *Cant. 7. 12.* and from *Psal. 63.* where *David* taketh notice, not only of his following after *God*, but that his soul did follow hard after him : but if in this we may allude, we shall say this unto you , *Judge nothing before the time* , let your graces grow before you judge of their growth. And there is this lastly that we would say, that growing in grace and the fruits of the Spirit , is a mystery that is more taken up by faith, then by sense ; we must grow by Faith , and by Faith we will be discern, especially under desertion, and when we are walking under a cloud , and *Christ* carves out bitter things unto us : we confesse indeed , when

... are dandled upon his knee, and our cup of  
 ... divine consolations is running over, and he cover-  
 ... us a table in the wilderness, then our growth  
 ... may be known by sense.

But as to the question we proposed, we shall give  
 you these evidences of your growth in Mortificati-  
 on : There is this first, those are admitted to read  
 their names in those ancient and precious Records  
 of heaven, and to know that they were engraven  
 upon his heart, before ever the corner stone of the  
 world was laid; this is clear from *Rev. 2. 17.* and,  
*1 Tim. 4. 8.* and the ground of it is this, that those  
 who are wrestling as Princes with their lusts, and  
 enduring the heat of the day, he lets them see a  
 weight of the crown, and of that eternal felicity, that  
 they may endure that good fight of faith, and  
 persevere to the end, that they may obtain that  
 crown of life. And there is this ground of it also,  
 because such are much in the exercise of those two  
 cardinal and architectionick graces of the spirit,  
 faith and prayer, by which much divine familiarity  
 and fellowship with God is attained, and, so faith  
 both increase with the increase of God.

There is this second evidence, when our lusts  
 have not such power to disturb us in holy duties,  
 as in prayer, hearing and meditating; if you have  
 dispossessed those unclean things, and can go about  
 those duties, with a great deal of more divine sere-  
 nity, and composednesse of spirit; but if this be  
 wanting, it is an evidence of no great growth in  
 Mortification, as is clear from *Jer. 23. 11.* and  
*Ezek. 33. 31.* And we conceive, that this is an  
 evidence of growth in Mortification upon those



two grounds ; First , A Christian that is much victor in this blessed warfare, is oft times under the dreadful impressions of the Majesty and Holiness of God , by which those sinful stirrings and motions of his heart are much abated ; by reason of his terror, he cannot endure himself to be *with the fore* in the ends of the earth, because such a one hath power over his spirit and rules over it , so that he is not like a city broken down and without walls. O ! but it is much for one, to subject all his thoughts to the obedience of *Jesus Christ* , to have nothing within him that lifts up the heel against the knowledge and excellency of *Jesus Christ* : and by the way, is a wofull and irrational evil, that we lodge *Christ* in our face , and in our mouth, we speak of him and seem to love him , but we lodge idols in our heart, that glorious and excellent Mansion , which should be kept for that excellent guest, that immortal King of glory , who is the light of the highest House.

There is this third evidence of growth to be much in exalting and magnifying of *Jesus Christ* and lifting up of that burdensome stone of his praise : this was an evidence of *Pauls* growth in Mortification , *Rom. 7. 25. 1 Cor. 15. 56, 57, 58.* O ! but one that hath really tasted of that noble thing, mortifying and pardoning grace their soul will esteem *Christ* matchless, and a divine necessity of speaking out his praise and setting him on high , will lay upon them : There are two special times , when Christians are put to a divine *non plus* in speaking out his praise, and are constrained to cry out the word , *Psal. 65. 1. Praise waiteth for thee,* ( or

ment) that is, it cannot be expressed. There is that time, when a Christian is caught up, as it were, unto the third heavens, and hath some eminent discoveries of God, then they are constrained to cry out, *exalt thy self, O Lord*; their thoughts are so high of him, that there can be no expressions wound futable unto his worth; And we confesse indeed, it is hard, if not impossible, to commit any but a superbole in commending of him. And there is that second time, when Christians are able to turn the battle to the gate, and in some measure are enabled to conquer their spiritual enemies; then, are they put to this, who can exalt him who is by his spirit degrees exalted above our blessing and praise; Sometimes a Christian is put to that spiritual posture and heavenly frame, that he cannot make language of his thoughts of *Christ*, that though his heart could indite a good matter concerning the King, yet his tongue cannot be the pen of a ready writer.

There is a fourth evidence of a Christians growth, when a Christian hath more spiritual discoveries and insight unto his corruptions and is more wrestling against them: and we would have you considering these two things; 1. That discovery of bosome and invisible lusts, is that which we chiefly take to be meant in this evidence, and wrestling against them; and there is this secondly, that our victories over our lusts, should increase our antipathy against sin, and make us to be zealous, once we shall obtain a compleat victory, and shall have accomplished our warfare.

There is a fifth evidence of our growth, when  
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the remembrance of our former lusts and Idols, do not provoke desires, after the enjoyment of those things again, but rather doth provoke the exercise of sorrowes, that ever that should have been our lot to have been under the dominion of such lusts and Idols: O! but there are many, to whom remembrance of their lusts will provoke their affections *Ezek. 23. 19, 21.* and this speaks much strength of love, that the picture of his Idols, should so much inflame him, and gain his affections; O! but looking upon our old sins with an affectionat eye, speaks little growth in mortification.

There is this last evidence of our growth, our high and majestick thoughts of Christ and his Word, for if once our humours be purged out, we shall then *as new born babes*, desire the sincere milk of the word; and I am perswaded, that as one doth obtain successe in this precious warfare, he doth ascend in his spiritual conception of *Christ*; such an one is endeavouring that evangelick & heavenly captivity of affections, to have them all confined unto *Jesus Christ*, that precious and excellent object: O! but one sight of *Jesus Christ*, in his matchlesse and transcendent comlineffe, to behold that divine contemplature, harmony and conjunction of all spiritual graces that are in him, would it not provoke us to cast away our Idols to the Moles and to the Batts, and should not they losse their beautiful hue and image? O! but eternally to contemplat that infinite Majesty that is in him, sweetly contemperat with his lowlinesse, so that we may say, there is both Majestick lowliness, and lowly majesty in him, to see likewayes his infinite highness, and his matchlesse

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and his unparalle'd humility, those things if once  
 they were attained, might make us to cry out,  
*who would not love thee, O King of Nations.*

Now that which we shall lastly speak to, shall be  
 to show unto you those things that speak and  
 prove our soul-union and heart-conjunction with  
 our Idols, that so we may be provoked to the morti-  
 fication of them; There is this first, that we im-  
 brace our Idols after frequent convictions of the  
 disadvantages of them, that after they have been  
 seen in their own native collours, yet we dandle  
 them upon our knee, like that word, *Isa. 57. 10.*  
*and that, Jer. 50. 38. they are mad upon their Idols,*  
 lamented in their pursuits after them; and no  
 doubt this speaks a most unmortified frame, and one  
 led with the love of his Idols, There is this  
 secondly, that speak it, our imbracing of our Idols  
 upon small tentations, like that, *2 Som. 12. 2, 3.*  
 here are some tentations of our lusts to gain our  
 affections, and some to gain our judgment; and to  
 do without the proposal of some great advantage, or  
 some solacing delight or pleasure, speaks us most  
 strongly united to our lusts. There is this thirdly,  
 that speaks that infinite toyl and labour that we  
 propose our selves to, to satisfie our lust; you will  
 find it *Eccles. 2.* where *Solomon* making pleasure and  
 carnal joy his Idol, is put to much toyl to satisfie  
 and believe it, it is more easie to mortifie your  
 lusts, then to satisfie them, for that is impossible  
 work: our Idols have two daughters that still cry,  
*Give, Give:* our Idols are like the grave, the barren  
 womb, the earth that is not filled with water, and  
 the

the fire, who never cry, *It is enough* : our Idols have out two attendants, *Impatience*, and *diligence* ; we will not weary our selves in the fire, to obtain satisfaction to all our lusts ; and if we do not attain it, we will curse our King, and look upward. There is this fourthly, that speaks our soul-union to our Idols, and it is the embracing of them, after application of threatnings, against those who should embrace that sin ; and yet to commit this sin with lifted up hand, is indeed to sport with the justice of God, or rather to put a bill of defiance in his hand, supposing that we are above the reach of his justice and power. And there is this fifthly, that speaks it, our killing of our convictions, which tend to the discovery of the sinfulness of sin, and pressing upon us those duties by which we attain to the Mortification of them ; and is it not certain, that we kill our convictions in the birth, and makes them to prove abortive. Love to our Idols is that which kills our convictions, and our killing of our convictions, is the mother of our love to our Idols : And there is this, lastly, that speaks our soul-union with our Idols ; those anxious sorrows when we misse the enjoyment of our Idols ; we are then ready to cry out, *It is better for me to die than to live* : and oft-times, when our Idols are taken from us, and are laid in the grave, our living lusts sit down, and lament over the grave of our buried Idols, crying forth, *Ah, my Lord*. And since there are such invisible, and wofull knots of union betwixt us and our Idols, we should endeavour to have all these knots loosed, and to have our soul united unto him, by those two precious and golden chains of Faith, and Love, and to have our hearts a Bethel, a house

house for God, and a temple for the holy Ghost; and not a *Bethaven*, a house of Idols, and a cage for foul unclean birds, that our spirits may be mansions for that *eternal Spirit*, and he may have an arbitrary power over us, and a negative voice in conducting us to heaven.

S E R M O M I I I.

Gal. 5. 24. *And they that are Christs have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.*

**M**ortification is that precious duty imposed upon man, not only by the law of Nature, but by the royal and excellent law of grace, Doth not the law and light of nature instruct man thus, it is better to kill then to be killed; and certainly, unless a Christian be the ruine of his iniquities, his iniquity shall certainly be his ruine; we shall either sing a song of triumph over our lusts, or our lusts shall sing a song of triumph over us; and doth not that royal law of liberty and grace enforce this upon us, while it desireth, that *we should crucifie our members which are upon the earth*, and be aspiring after a divine conformity with the Image of the invisible God; Though we conceive, there be some, that if they would retire themselves a little to beedold those subtile and invisible actings of the mystery of iniquity within them and those deep devices of Satan, and how many strange Lords, beside *Jesus Christ*, exercise dominion over them; they might be constrained to put in their *amen* unto that truth, that it is more easie for a camel to passe thorow the eye of a needle, then for such unmortified Christians, as

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many of us are , *to enter into the kingdom of God.* It is better for us to dwell in the house of mourning than in the house of mirth , and we may say of much of the carnal joy that is amongst us , *Such laughter is mad, and such mirth what doth it ?* we may wish for some retired cottage in the wilderness where we may go aside , and spend our seven years in the bitterness of our soul , and account it marvelous loving kindnesse, if we shall obtain hope in our end: It is without all debate, that the general and universal evil of our dayes is , that Christians are so little in the exercise of this precious grace of Mortification ; we think, we take a greater latitude in our way to heaven, than that cloud of wildernesses which went before us, did adventure to take ; and it is certain , that if one from the dead were admitted to write Commentars upon the disadvantages of satisfying the lusts of the flesh they would point forth marvelous hurt and infinit losse in exercising any of those ; as likewayes, if any from above were admitted to write upon the advantages of *crucifying the flesh with the affections and lusts thereof* , what precious commendation might they give to those that are exercised in those low , but exalting works of Mortification ? Believe me this is most certain, that it is easier to mortifie your lusts than to satisfie them : for we conceive , that such an one who is spending his precious time in the satisfying of his lusts : doth spend his time betwixt these three; the impatiency of his lusts, which still cry forth, *give, give* ; the impotency and weakness of the means he hath to satisfie such lusts, and the conviction of the impossibility of satisfying the insatiable

Insatiable desires, and infinit lusts of sin: anxiety and sorrow are the constant attendants of a man that is not studying to crucifie his lusts and affections: and certainly, if we may allude to that word, *Jer. 48 10. Cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood*, he is cursed, that doth not endeavour to crucifie and bring low the seven abominations of his heart, that we may with *Naphtali and Zebulun*, *Exposard our lives unto death in the high places of the field*, and that there might be none of our lusts to cry forth within us, *the bitternesse of death is past*; that may endeavour to cut them in pieces before the sword. We conceive, this work of Mortification, is the most pleasant exercise of a Christian, if not in its own nature, yet in its fruits and effects.

Now before we shall speak any thing unto those things which we proposed to speak of at the last occasion, we shall speak a little to this, what is the reason that Christians resolutions and purposes to quite such a predominant lust, and to forsake such an idol, do oft-times vanish without any fruit? Will these cords of divine resolution by which they bind themselves, are but as tow and flax before the force of temptation, they decreeing many things which are not established: And we confesse, this is incident an evil unto his own, that sometimes they are resolved in nothing so much as this, to solve no more; they in a manner give over the duty of resolution, because they are so short-coming the duty of performance: And we conceive, that this is occasioned either through this, that Christians do no resolve upon the strength of a mediator, or if they do resolve upon his strength,

they are not much in the improvement of it for the bringing low of such an iniquity. And we conceive, this was the ground that *Peters* resolutions were brought so much low, and were blasted; and this is somewhat pointed at, *Isa.* 40. 30, 31. where it is said *even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall*; the greatest natural abilities which might help men to run and not be weary, and the most promising evidences from themselves, shall fail and be blasted; but (as it is in the 31. v.) *they that wait upon the Lord, shall renew their strength*, even those who are denied to their own strength. And we conceive, that there are these two great mysteries of Christianity, first to resolve so as being convinced of this, that we are not able, as of our selves, to think one good thought. And, secondly, which is a little more mysterious to believe that *Christ* strength laid hold on by faith is as effectual for the crucifying such a lust, as if it were our own proper strength and excellency. certainly, one that hath once swallowed this came of Christianity, needs not strain at the lower gnat of it: we would only say this by the way, study to flee comparative resolutions, for ordinarily these are much blasted, as was clear in *Peter* though all should forsake thee, yet *I will not*: study to be positive in your resolutions, but beware of comparisons.

This is likeways occasioned through this, that ordinarily they determine the mortifying of such a lust rather with their light than with their affections; as it is sometimes the exercise of a Christian when he goeth to prayer for the mortifying of such a lust, his light prayeth more than his affections and sometimes it falls out, that when light and



Judgment is praying for the mortifying of such an idol, affection, as it were, entereth a protestation against the granting of such a desire, and in a manner saith, *Lord mortifie not such a lust.* This we conceive was the case and practice of those who are made mention of, *Ezek. 14. 4, 5.* who came to enquire of the Lord, having their Idols in their heart: we may put out Idols from our minde, but have our Idols in our heart, when we come to seek the mortification of them; and we would only say this unto you, when ye begin to resolve, study to have your souls under a divine impression of the sinfulness of such a lust, as likewises under the infinite disadvantage of following such a lust: we conceive, that the ordinary time of a Christians resolution is, when they are blessed with the dew of heaven, and are admitted to taste of his sweetness; And oft-times Christians resolutions are rather according to their present frame, than according to that which probably will be their frame ere long: And this is the occasion that Christians who are big in their resolutions, are often short and defective in their performances; or else we conceive it to be occasioned through Christians being too much given to sloathfulness, and that woful Idol of self-indulgency, they resolve fair, but do not take pains to accomplish their vows; This is clearly pointed at, not only, *Prov. 13. 4.* where it is said, *The sluggard desireth, but he hath nothing:* but more clearly, *Pro. 21. 25.* *The desire of the sluggard slayeth him, and the reason is subjoyned, because his hands refuse to labor:* it is most certain, that except a Christian be diligent, he can never be a mortifying Christian;

Mortification is not attained with ease, we must travel in pain, and have the pangs of the new-birth before *Christ be formed in us.*

And there is this lastly, which doth occasion it. Christians do not propose to themselves a sublime and divine end in mortifying of their lusts; and certainly we conceive, this is the most ordinary and incident case unto his own, we either propose this end in mortifying of our lusts, that we may have somewhat whereof to glory, and to make mention of our righteousness, *even of ours only*; or else we propose this carnal end, of studying to have a name continually amongst the living in *Jerusalem*, lest that inward mystery of iniquity that is within us be engraven on our fore-heads; and think certainly, that name may be engraven upon many professors in this age, which *Jude* giveth them, vers. 12. of his Epistle, he calleth them *twise dead*; that is, not only dead in reality, but that through the deceitfulness of sin, they had even lost any name of living they likewises had, so that it was also vanished and gone away. I am perswaded, that were we known each one to another, as we are known to him, *who hath those seven eyes that run to and fro through the earth*, no doubt, we should wonder at the boldness of our hope; and laugh at the strength of our delusions.

Now that which first we proposed to speak of from the words was this, the advantage which a Christian hath by the mortifying of his lusts, and being continually exercised in this precious warfare; and (as we cleared at the last occasion) the advantage of a Mortifying Christian was this, ordinarily

ordinarily such a Christian doth live under the impression of his interest in *God*, he is admitted to read his name written in the book of life: now this is clear from *Rev. 2. 17.* where he saith, *to him that overcometh, who is in the way of overcoming, will I give a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it:* as likewayes from *Rev. 2. 11.* *he that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death:* as also from *2 Tim. 4. 8.* where these two are sweetly conjoynd and linked together: and it must certainly be so, that a mortifying Christian is one that liveth under the divine impression of his interest in *God*, not only because of this, that one who is not mortifying his lust, as it were, doth darken his hope and obscure his evidence; every dayes intermission of mortification, being (as it were) a score drawn through the extract of our peace with *God*, so that in proccesse of time that precious extract of peace becometh illegible unto us. And we shall say this, that a Christian who can keep the faith of his interest, without the exercise of Mortification, may suspect the reality of such assurance: mortification and assurance die and live together, are weak and strong together: But likewayes it must be so, because of this, that ordinarily *God* rewardeth a mortifying Christian with the intimation of his peace, he takes them in unto the eternal purposes of his heart, and the secrets of his counsel, and lets him see his name written in the records of heaven, lest he should faint in the day of adversity, and so prove his strength to be but small: did ye never know what such a thing as this meant, that when ye



most serious in the exercise of Mortification, yet were admitted to behold that precious and everlasting hope? There is this second advantage that a Christian hath by being continually exercised in this blessed warfare, and it is this, Mortification is that grace which keeps all the graces of the spirit in action and exercise; it is that superior wheel, at the motion of which, all the inferior wheels do move and if we may so speak, Mortification is this, it is all the graces, of the spirit combined in one, and exercising themselves in one divine act; Faith is exercised by a Mortifying Christian, not only in this, in drawing furniture from *Jesus Christ* who is our head, but likeways, in that it is that defensive peice of armour, ( it being called *the shield of Faith* ) by which we quench the fiery darts of the Devil: this war will not proceed with much advantage, if faith be out of the field: So also the grace of hope is exercised by a Mortifying Christian, for this is its exercise in this blessed warfare, to hold up the crown of immortal glory in its right hand, with this motto engraven upon it, *he that persevereth to the end shall be saved, and obtain this crown of life*, which is the great encouragment of a Christian in this exercise: Likeways, the grace of watchfulness is exercised in this blessed warfare: for watchfulness ( if so we may speak ) is the centinel of the Christian, that standeth upon the watch-tower, and giveth warning unto a Christian of the motions of his adversary; watchfulness warneth us when first corruption begins to stirre: So the grace of love is much exercised in this blessed warfare; for a Christian where he beholds that divine and unsearchable compas-

compassion of *Jesus Christ* which he exerciseth towards it, in upholding it under its straits, that when the archers shoot at him, and do grievously wound him, that yet his bow should abide in its strength, this makes the grace of love to burn and live within a Christian. And lastly, the grace of *Prayer* is much exercised in this blessed warfare, for when faith begins to die, and hope begins to lose its courage, when watchfulness begins to sleep, and love begins to be remiss, and to wax cold, then prayer as a flying Cherub, doth go to the Captain of our salvation, and desireth that he might help them in the day of their need: prayer is the sweet correspondent of the Christian betwixt heaven and earth: prayer stayeth upon the Mount with *Christ*, when *faith* and *watchfulness* are in the field with our corruptions and lusts that are in us: and we shall only say this by the way, I know not whether a Christian be more obliged to *Jesus Christ* for justification than for sanctification; but we conceive it is better to conjoyn those together, than to compare them one with another.

There is this third advantage that a Mortifying Christian hath, such a Christian doth most ordinarily meet with most divine solace and intimate communion and fellowship with *God*; such a Christian is admitted to taste of the honey out of the rock, and to be satisfied with the finest of the wheat. Would ye know the reason why you have not been in heaven these many dayes? it is this, ye have not been fighting these many dayes. Now this is clear from *Rev. 2. 17.* where that promise is given to the mortifying Christian, that he shall taste of the

*hidden manna*, which is the sweetnesse of *Jesus Christ* as likewayes, *Rom. 8. 13.* If ye through the spirit mortifie the deeds of the flesh, ye shall live: as also *Rom. 7. 24. vers.* compared with 25. where wrest-ling *Paul* doth receive songs of everlasting praise put in his mouth: would ye know the person that is admitted to sing one of the songs of *Zion*, while he is in a strange land? it is the Mortifying Christian: for when he is in the pursute of his enemies, he is then admitted to put out his finger, and taste of the honey, that his eyes may be enlightened. There is a mortification that is pleaded for by many in these dayes, whose highest advancement in this precious grace doth not consist in that which it is, in knowing and being convinced of, and mourning over sin; but this is their Mortification, that one should be dead to the sense and conviction of sin: we shall passe no other verdict upon such Antinomian Mortification as this, but only this, it is indeed the Mortification of godlinesse, it is a crucifying of repentance and holinesse, it is a killing of the new man within a Christian, as likewayes a quickning of the old-man in its lusts and affections, this Mortification is no other thing but *Sathan* transformed in an angel of light, and this is a piece of that new Gospel which is so much preached in these dayes, which if an angel should bring from heaven, we ought not to believe it: this is no new light, but old darkness covered over with the vail of a glistering light. O! study to be much under the impression of the bitterness of sin, that so ye may taste of the consolations of the *holy Ghost*.

There is this fourth advantage that a Christian hath



hath by being continually exercised in this warfare, which is, that such a Christian hath distinct and perfect discoveries, not only of the deceitfulness of his own heart, but also of the subtilty of corruption and sin that doth assault him: a mortifying Christian is a most experienced Christian: this clear all along, *Rom. 7.* where wrestling *Paul* hath so distinct discoveries of himself, as he saith, there being a law in his members rebelling against the law of his mind, and bringing him into subjection. And certainly, there is much precious advantage that redounds unto the Christian by being convinced of the deceitfulness of his own heart, and of that mystery of iniquity that is within him, for such a Christian doth attain to the exercise of the grace of humility; for when he beholdeth himself as in a glasse, he cryeth forth, *Wo is me, I am undone*: I think it is in some sense lawfull for Christians to practice much of *Peters* divinity, which he had, *Luk. 5. 8.* *Depart from me, for I am a sinful man*; not that it was well argued by him, but it spake forth the high apprehensions he had of the holiness of God, and the low apprehensions he had of himself: as likewise, such a Christian is much denyed to his own strength, and so is necessitate to go unto one, on whom his strength is laid, as likewise such a Christian is much in the exercise of the grace of watchfulness; he is not ignorant of the devices of *Sathan*, which make him to stand continually upon his guard, lest he be overtaken with the snare of the devil.

There is this fifth advantage that a Christian hath by being much in the exercise of mortification, he

he doth attain to much divine conformity with God, and is made a partaker of the divine nature, of that invisible Majesty : this is clear from , *Rev. 3. 5.* where that promise, *I will cloath him in white,* is in a part accomplished to a Christian, even while he is in this valley of tears. And certainly, this is the compend and sweet epitome of all Christian advantages , to be made like unto the Majesty of God ; and it is not a conformity unto him for a day, but such a mortifying Christian, is most constant in keeping the divine lineaments , and spiritual characters of that precious image undefaced in him ; as it is promised, *Rev. 3. 12. Him that overcometh, I will make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out :* And certainly that promise of stability , is in a part accomplished to a Christian, even while he is here below : what could a Christian desire more then this , to be admitted to partake of the image of the invisible God , and to be made like unto him ?

There is this last advantage that a Christian hath, by being continually exercised in this precious work of mortification, such an one hath his antipathy and hatred against sin much increased : would you know the Christian that liveth under the impression of the sinfulness of sin ? it is the mortifying Christian. I think that vain distinction which Papists have, of mortal and venial sins, Christians in their practice do much allow and commend ; where are some sins seems venial to them, which to commit and exercise, they take a latitude to themselves , as may be clear in this , a Christian will without much difficulty, if he be not tender, commit  
such

such things as are not consistent with the exercise of grace within him ; he needs no other toleration but this , to have this made out to him that there is a consistency betwixt such a lust, and the living and spiritual nature of grace within him : but , no doubt, if we argued right, we should be provoked to desist from sin, even from the disadvantages that attend the pursuing after any lust.

Now that which we shall speak to next , shall be this, what disadvantages a Christian hath by an interruption of this spiritual warfare, and not being much taken up in the exercise of Mortification. If this question were proposed to many , when they did last set some hours apart to mortifie their sins ? the most part should be put to a *non-plus*, not knowing the last time when they were exercised in this precious warfare. And I would only say this, a Christian that can interrupt the work of Mortification for some weeks together, may either suspect that grace is groaning within him, with the groanings of a deadly wounded man ; or else that he is not at all begotten unto a lively hope, there is no forlosse nor discharge in this warfare , but we must fight till once the one foot be within that place of everlasting delight.

There is this second disadvantage that attendeth a Christian who interrupteth this warfare, ordinarily such a one doth contract much hardnesse and impenitency of heart ; this was clear in the practice of *David* , who when once he intermitted this war , could write a letter to the killing of godly *Uriah* , and no mention of smiting of heart : This is certainly a constant attendant of one who is not mor;



mortifying himself, he maketh his heart *die as a stone within him*: the mortifying Christian keeps this holy Zeal within him, *he hateth the garments spotted with the flesh*: would ye read the original and rise of hardness of heart in these dayes amongst us? It is this, Christians are not much in the exercise of Mortification; And I believe the Gospel hath been preached nigh six thousand years, and it is much to be debated, if ever misbelief, and hardness of heart were so universal diseases among Christians as in these dayes: we think to win to heaven by guesse, which maketh us so little intend this blessed work.

There is this third disadvantage, that a Christian meets with, by the intermission of this warfare, and it is this, that ordinarily such a Christian hath his lusts most reigning and living within him: Sin will gather more strength, by the interruption of one dayes exercise of Mortification, than ye can prevail over, by wrestling with it many dayes: This is that subtil dexterity of sin, it can recruit if self in few hours with much ease; and certainly, if ye be not constant in this warfare, it is like ye will not sing many songs of triumph over your lusts: he must be constant in this fight, who would be a triumpher in the fight: how long is it since ye set up an *Ebenezer* to God, saying, *hitherto hath he helped me*? and when did ye set up trophies and monuments of your victory? We think the Christians of this age, leave fewest and least trophies of their victory in the way to heaven, as ever any that went before them.

There is this fourth disadvantage which a Christian

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Christian hath, by the intermission of this warfare, and it is this, that ordinarily such a Christian liveth without fight of return, and overcoming at the last: A Christian who interrupteth this exercise of mortification, fighteth as we speak, with a doubtful war, not having determined whether the fight shall be in his favour or not; there is somewhat of this pointed out in *1 Tim. 4. 8.* where *Paul*, fighting in an agony, as the word importeth, perswadeth himself that he shall have that crown of righteousness, which is the suitable reward of a conquering Christian: and believe me, I know not what shall afford a Christian, more Christian peace and consolation than this, to believe, that *he shall put all enemies under his feet, and make them his footstool.*

There is this fifth disadvantage, that a Christian interrupting the exercise of mortification hath, and it is this, that ordinarily such a one, when he is passing thorow the first and second gates of death, and when he is to render up an account of his stewardship, hath least persuasion of his interest in God. Would ye know the reason, why Christians die with so little faith of evidence? it is this, they have not been much in the exercise of Mortification; certainly the conviction of short coming in this duty, and the apprehension of eternity and of approaching judgement, are two sweet companions together: I think, next to Justification and Faith in *Jesus Christ*, which is the hinge of all our consolation, a Christian hath most peace in the work of Mortification, in the day when he shall be standing upon that utmost line betwixt time and eternity. O! what consolation had old *Paul*, when  
he

he spake these words, when he was ready to be dissolved, *I have fought the good fight of faith*; I doubt much, if ever Paul sang a song of praise upon a higher key, than when he sung that song, *2 Tim. 4. 8. I have fought the good fight of faith: Pauls heart was half transported, when he did reflect upon this, that all his lusts were dying and killed at his feet.*

And there is this last disadvantage that attends a Christian, who interrupts this warfare, that ordinarily such a one is much blasted of God, in the exercise of other graces; yea more, he is blasted in the exercise or gifts; these two losses will attend a Christian who interrupts this warfare: and certainly, if a Christian be blasted in grace, and be not blasted in gifts, it is one of the sorest strokes that can befall him; for ordinarily, it is a pillow sewed under our arm-holls, which maketh us pursue sin without fear: this is secretly hinted at, *Eccles. 2. 9.* where that which made Solomon rove after his Idols, was this, *Also my wisdom remained with me*: he was as wise a man now, as he was before. And certainly, when gifts are vigorous, and graces not, they may sit down and lament over themselves *seven nights and seven dayes.*

Now we shall shut up our discourse at this time: we shall only speak a little to this, what may be spoken for consolation to those who are somewhat serious in accomplishing this warfare, and yet have not sensible advantage, nor successe over their lusts, who have been toiling all night, and yet have catched nothing; And we conceive, that God doth ordinarily propose to a tender Christian these

three



three divine ends, by carving out to them such a lot, first that he may be kept in a constant correspondence with the Throne of grace; he, in a manner, wounds us in our leg, that we may not wander much abroad from his Throne: and certainly, Christians may be convinced of this, that if they had their will in Mortifying, they would not be much in corresponding; which may be demonstrat unto you thus, because that which provoketh one to converse with God, is rather a principle of necessity, than a principle of love: a Christian will go six times to prayer, yea many times, from a principle of necessity, before he go twice from a principle of love and delight. Secondly, That the Christians faith may be put to trials and exercised, whether or not we will believe and rest upon him, notwithstanding that we see not Mortification growing within us: we confesse, our little advancement in Mortification, is the foundation of misbelief: and certainly, to his own, God hath this design, even the trial of their grace, whether or not they will believe and *hope against hope*. Thirdly, The Lord doth it, because he knoweth that a Christian can better improve his little advancement in Mortification than he can improve his great success; believe me it is certain, that in a Christians advancement in grace, it is more difficulty to bear it, than to bear his little advancement and progresse in grace; and the great reason and occasion of it is, because ordinarily pride and arrogancy do blossom and spring off this precious root of grace; for what doth decrease to a Christian of the lust of the eye, and of the flesh, seems  
to

to accrease to the pride of life ; for as the one seemeth to go down, the other doth ascend and go up. And to you who never knew what this exercise of Prayer and Mortification meant, ( are there not many here who never knew what it was to have any change in their life ? ) We would only propose this unto you , did ye never know what it was to be under the impression of the sinfulness of sin ? or , did you ever know what it was to water your countenance with tears, under the impression of it? like that word, *Psal. 32. 3.* where *David* saith, *When I kept silence , my bones waxed old, through my roaring all the day long.* That word *roaring* speaks forth not only this , that sometimes a Christian doth rather mourn as a beast, than complain as a man, ( *roaring* being the voice of a beast ) but likeways speaks forth this , that sometimes Christians are under such an exercise , that the open field is a more fit place for them, then the secret retirements of their most quiet chambers. *David* was forced to roar as a beast , when the bones which are the pillars of his house , were waxing old and mouldering within him : certainly the day is coming, when ye who never knew what it was to crucifie a lust , *Christ* shall crucifie you upon that crosse of everlasting pain , when he shall tread you in the win-presse of the indignation of the most High, when he shall make the arrowes of his indignation sharp upon you ; ye who will not quite sin, sin shall once be your eternal companion : and when *Christ* hath been inviting you so often to quite such lusts, and ye return so often an negative answer to him, this will be the sentence, which shall be past upon you,

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you, *Be it unto you, even as you will, they are joyned to Idols, let them alone;* and certainly, when Christ ceaseth to be a reprovcr, that man is in a sad and desperat estate O! that ye might once fight this good fight of faith: your scent doth remain with many of you; are there not many here who never knew what it was to spend an hour in secret wrestling and debating with their lusts? The strong man keeps the house, and so all is at peace with them, there is no going out, nor coming in at the gates of their city, but peace is, as it were, exactors of that house, and those bear sway within it. O! cursed be that peace which shall end in everlasting war with God. Would ye know the exercise and case of those who are in everlasting chains? We can represent it under nothing so fit as this, it is infinit justice and infinit omnipotency, wrestling and crushing finit and finfull man? sometimes the pestil of divine wrath coming down upon one part of his body, and at another time upon another; they are now living an endlesse life of death, and are spending their dayes in a dying life, they shall be eternally dying, and yet never able to die. Are there not some of you, who are so joyned to your Idols, that if *Dives* should come from hell and preach this text to you, *Crucifie your lusts*, ye would stop your ears at that precious exhortation. Ye may hide sin under your tongue, but be perswaded, that at last it shall be in your belly as the poison of Asps, and as the venome of Dragons. And we would leave this advice and counsel upon Christians, who have begun this precious warfare, *stand fast to the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free, and be*



be not entangled again into that yoke of bondage. Sin is a yoke that neither we nor our fathers were able to bear; and we desire you to meditate upon this advice, Study to be as much in mortification, and in the exercise of this duty, as if ye were to obtain salvation by works; but withall, study to be as much denied unto those things, and to have as low an esteem of your selves, as if ye were bound to do nothing, or had done nothing at all: study to work as one that is a legalist indeed, and one who desires to maintain good works, but study self-denial, as one that hath fled for refuge unto that blessed hope that is set before you. *Christ* is standing at the end of the walk of a Mortifying Christian, with a crown in his right hand; and he desireth us to persevere unto the end, that we may obtain that immortal crown one day with precious *Christ*, shall be an infinite recompense of all our toil; and the more exercise of mortification you are put to, heaven will be more sweet and delightfome unto you.

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#### S E R M O N I V.

Gal. 5. 24. *And they that are Christs have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.*

**S**uch is that universal stupidity and hardness of heart that hath overtaken the professors of this generation, that if *Christ* should come from heaven, and read over unto us the compleat rol of our iniquities, and show unto us these records, in which all our wanderings are written, the most part of us would not be much affected, nor much in the exercise

exercise of sorrow. No doubt, it is easier for a camel to passe thorow the eye of a needle, than for stupid Christians, such as we are, to enter into the Kingdom of God. It is one of the mysteries of his overcoming grace, that he hath not broken these two precious staffes of beauty and bands amongst us, that he hath not broken the covenant of his peace, and ceased to entertain so near a relation betwixt himself and us, As likewayes, it is a mystery of his love, that we are not made eternal monuments of the justice of God, and this Motto engraven upon us, *behold these that made not God their refuge: God is glorious in the exercise of all his holy attributes; but in none more, than in the exercise of his patience and long-suffering toward us; and in a manner he darkeneth the glory of his justice, and casteth a vail over his spotlesse holinesse, that the exercise of the attribute of patience and long-suffering, may be rendered more conspieuous.* I only pose you with this question, is not mortification a mystery unto your practice? Can such a delusion as this overtake you, that ye shall reign with *Christ*, though your lusts reign with you as long as ye are here? It is certain ye know, that mortification is that precious exercise in which ye ought to be taken up: and I conceive, that there is only this difference betwixt sinning against Light, and that unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost, that the sinning against Light, is a sinning against the common work of the spirit upon your understanding, but the sin against the Holy Ghost, is a sin against the common work of the spirit upon the affections: and no doubt, there is a near bordering betwixt these

these two, it is the first step to it, by which ye rise up and ascend unto the acting of this sin. It is a faithful saying (saith the Apostle Paul) that if we die with Christ, we shall also reign with him; and we may likewisesay, It is a faithful saying, that if we are not with Christ, and be not conformed unto him in his suffering, we cannot be conformed unto him in the power of his resurrection: ye are all willing to take Christ as a Justifier and as a Saviour, but unwilling to take him as a Sanctifier and as a Prince of life; but know this, that the gifts of this spotlesse Lamb are so sweetly linked together, that they were like his own coat that was upon his body, which was without seam that could not be divided: and so except the whole gifts of Jesus Christ fall unto us by the same divine lot, we can have no part nor portion therein: This Mortification is the compend of Christ and of his righteousness; and certainly, a Christian reading these words, he may stand amazed and be ashamed at his own stupidity, that interest in Christ should be connected with such a degree of Mortification, though we conceive, there be many who take to themselves the name of Christians, that never knew what it was to exercise themselves in Mortification.

I shall only (before I speak to that which mainly we intend to speak to) press this grace of Mortification upon you by these things. First, This may enforce this duty of Mortification of lusts, because it is impossible for one to satisfie their lusts, let them accomplish never so diligent a search to find satisfaction to them; therefore ye would be undeceived and convinced of that delusion, ye conceive that if your lusts had their desire, they would be

satisfied



grieved, but that is most clearly held forth to be  
*Psalm 78. 29, 30.* where it is said of their lusts,  
*they got their hearts desire, and the word that is*  
*spoken, yet were they not estranged from their lusts.*  
 What a covetous man suppose this with himself, that  
 upon the having of so many thousands in the world,  
 his lust or covetousnesse would be satisfied, but *Job*  
 hath refuted this, chap. 20. 22. saying, *in the fulnesse*  
*of his sufficiency, he shall be in straits:* It is easier to  
 mortifie your lusts, then to satisfie them. And this  
 secondly we would say, that though ye hide sin  
 under your tongue, and though it be sweet unto  
 you, yet know, that the day is approaching when  
 it shall be in your bowels, as the gall of Aspes, and  
 the poyson of Dragons: know this for a certain-  
 re, that the momentany pleasures of sin which they  
 afford unto you, are not worthy to be compared  
 with that eternal weight of unsupportable misery  
 that shall be inflicted upon you. O! but it is a ter-  
 rible sight to behold a living God entering eternally  
 the lists with a poor sinfull sinner, to have omni-  
 potency and justice fighting against the dust of his  
 feet. There is this lastly which we would say, not  
 exercising your selves constantly in this precious  
 work of Mortification, doth interrupt much pre-  
 cious fellowship, that you might have with *Christ*;  
 and that are tasting of the sweetnesse of sin, cannot  
 taste of the sweetnesse of heaven: this is clear, *Rom.*  
*13.* where mortifiers have that promise, that  
*they shall live.* And I shall only say this by the way,  
 conceive it to be a question that is difficult to  
 determine, whether it be more for the advantage  
 of one that is under any predominant lust, to have  
 the

the objects upon which it feeds withdrawn, or have them furnished, to feed upon: as far as instance, if one be under the woful predominant pride, it is a question whether the want of occasion to exercise and feed that lust, be better, or have it; proud *Achitophel*, when he wanted the objects upon which pride doth feed, he will go and strangle himself; and when we have them furnished unto us, what secret Idolatry, what desperate Atheism do we commit in the secret temples of our heart, and in the chambers of our Imagery? Mortify more, or ye shall pray lesse.

Now that which we intend mainly to speak to, that second thing which we proposed concerning Mortification, from these words, and it was the content of Mortification, that they did not only crucify their predominant lusts, which are here called *affections*, because they are Idols, and these are linked together by that passion of love; but likewise they ought to mortify the first motions and stirrings of corruption, and all occasions to it, which are here called *lusts*: but moreover, one that is a spiritual mortifier, must mortify original sin, which is here called *the flesh*, as oft-times it hath that name in Scripture, an exercise which is unknown to many, if not unto all: we think original sin but *Zoar*, and it is hard indeed, to be convinced of the sinfulness of original sin, and to take it up in its native colours. Now in speaking upon the work of Mortification of original sin, we shall insist long upon this, that it is the duty of a Christian to be exercised in the crucifying of this sin, is clear from, *Col. 3. 5*, where we are commanded

or mortifie our members ; and it is clear from the  
 ar notice of *Paul*, *Rom. 7. 24.* *O wretched man that I*  
*am, who shall deliver me from this body of death ?*  
 There is a strong Emphasis in the word *me* , as if  
 or *Paul* would have said , if infinit grace can have  
 d' tunds , then, no doubt, sinful *Paul* is the bounds  
 go and to it.

We shall for more clear speaking to this , first,  
 speak a little unto this , what is original sin ; and  
 of conceive, that it stands in these, original sin is  
 M. Imputation of that transgression of *Adam* unto  
 for he being a common and representative per-  
 son, we fell in his falling , and did stand in his  
 erning , but likeways original sin doth compre-  
 he and this , want of original righteousness , man  
 cruc being created after that noble pattern and  
 call the Idea, *the Image of God* ; man now carrieth  
 ese the image of *God* in his wisdom and in his om-  
 t impotency, but while he was in his primitive estate,  
 he did carry an impression of the holiness of *God* :  
 which likeways original sin doth comprehend this , a  
 at ineness to the committing of all evil , as also an  
 which aptitude and unfitness for the doing of any good,  
 and this is that which we are all by nature. The  
 own part of original sin is clear from *Rom. 5. 12.* and  
 but verses. And the rest may be gathered from  
 ced by places of Scripture, but is comprehended in  
 e up one word, *Eph. 2. 1.* *We were dead in sins and*  
 on the *passes* : one can no more move in the acting of  
 all spiritual good, than if he were one altogether  
 a Christ out life.

We shall secondly speak a little to those advan-  
 andes that a Christian may have, by being convinced



of original sin: It is most certain, that a Christian here is less convinced of original corruption, than he is of any actual transgression almost that doth befalling him; and (as we were speaking) the reason of the hindrance doth proceed partly from this, that a Christian taketh not up the sinfulness of original sin, though it would be a sin having more in it, than is in twenty, yea even an hundred actual transgressions; or else it proceedeth from this, that Christians are not convinced of the influence original sin hath upon all the outward actings of iniquity; it is that fruitful womb that doth alwayes bear twins, and is never barren; it is that root that doth daily bring forth wormwood and gall; or else it doth proceed from this, that we think that original sin is not our own, and that we are not so guilty, as if indeed we had eaten this cursed Apple.

But as to the advantages of being convinced of original corruption, we conceive that there is this first advantage, That it is impossible for any to have high thoughts of *Jesus Christs* love, and of the offer of mercy, except he be convinced of original sin: Would ye know the reason why *Christ* hath so small an esteem among you? it is because of this, ye are not convinced of your original corruption: this is somewhat pointed at, *Rom. 5. 6, 7, 8.* verses where the Apostle heighteneth the love of *Christ* dying for us, he pitches upon this to commend our original corruption, that *we were sinners without strength*. O! what a mystery is the condescending grace of *Christ* unto a sinner believing original corruption; it is as it were, the foundation upon which all our esteem doth arise and spring

There is somewhat of this likewayes pointed at *Rom.* 24. compared with vers. 25. where *Paul* beginning to commend free grace, his song doth arise to the highest Key, because he hath been convinced of *this body of death that dwelleth within him.* I would only say this, if you would learn this divine lesson of putting a high accompt upon *Christ*, study original corruption much.

There is this second advantage that a *Christian* hath from the conviction of it, and it is this, it doth exceedingly commend the omnipotency of his grace in mortifying corruption, when ye are convinced of this sin: when was it that *Paul* had the highest accompt of the omnipotency of the grace of *Christ*? was it not when he was forced to cry forth, *O! wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death?* And this is certainly pointed at, *Eph.* 2. 1. where the quickening vertue of grace, is commended from this, the object upon which it is exercised, *ye that were dead in sins and trespasses.*

There is this third advantage, that floweth from conviction of original sin, and it is this. It is a compendious way to keep the *Christian* under the exercise of humility, under the highest attainments of Mortification, or under the highest attainments of communion and fellowship with God. Would ye know the reason why we are so easily puffed up under some small successe, or some small familiarity with *Christ*? It is want of reflect thoughts upon original corruption that is within us: Therefore I would prescribe this to *Christians* under their highest advancement by grace, to sit down and seriously

reflect upon that which they are by nature, *th*  
*their father is an Amorite, and their Mother an Hittite*  
 and the rock from whence they are hewn, *ma*  
 preach humility to them; this is clear, *Rom. 7. 2*  
 where *Paul* under the conviction of original sin;  
 calleth himself a *wretched man*, and is clear al  
 from the 9. vers. of that Chapter, where whe  
 once original sin is discovered, *he died* in his ow  
 apprehensions: if we were in the apprehension  
 this more, the wind of the wilderness would n  
 bind us up in her wings, till our substance we  
 dissolved.

There is a fourth advantage a Christian ha  
 from the conviction of original corruption, and  
 is this, it keepeth the Christian under the deepe  
 impression of the sinfulness of sin. I confess, th  
 is one of the greatest mysteries of Christianity,  
 have our soul constantly under the impression  
 the sinfulness of sin, which we conceive, is impo  
 sible to be attained without solid conviction  
 original corruption: this is somewhat hinted  
*Rom. 7. 13.* when *Paul* once by the Commandmen  
 having original sin discovered, sin became un  
 him *exceeding sinfull*: and the reason why origin  
 sin discovered, hath such influence upon this,  
 because ordinarily we conceive, that the a<sup>t</sup>tings  
 sin do not proceed from our selves, but from th  
*deceiver of the brethren*, which *James* doth abu  
 dantly refute, for when a man is tempted, *he*  
*entised by his lusts.*

There is this fifth advantage that a Christian ha  
 by being convinced of original sin; It is an exce  
 lent way to keep the Christian under a mo  
 watch



atchful and fearing frame : such language would  
 not been heard out of a *Hazaels* mouth, *Am I a dog*  
*commit this*, if he had been convinced of original  
 n; but because he was a stranger to this, his pre-  
 mption led him above that which was indeed  
 within him : therefore , when one is convinced of  
 their proneness to act iniquity , of their want of  
 that conformity with God, they remember to stand  
 upon their watch-tower lest they be ensnared : this  
 most clearly pointed at, 1 Cor. 9. last, where *Paul*  
 put to this exercise, *I bear down my body , and*  
*bring it into subjection* ; and the reason is subjoyned,  
 because he was possessed with a holy jealousy of  
 himself, and entertained a divine suspicion, which  
 was consistent with the acting of hope. I know no-  
 thing to make a Christian watch over his own heart  
 so much as this ; to see that spawn of iniquity which  
 is within him, to behold that fruitful mother of in-  
 iquity which never was declared barren and never  
 shall be, till sin shall be no more within his own.

There is this sixth advantage a Christian hath, by  
 being convinced of original corruption ; It is that  
 which will keep the soul under the highest estima-  
 tion of *Christ* , and will make the grace of love to  
 burn most vigorously within a Christian : O ! but  
 when one shall reflect upon these two, the spotlesse  
 holinesse of *Christ* , that absolute purity of that pre-  
 cious Lamb, and shall again descend to reflect upon  
 these mysteries of iniquity which are within him-  
 self, it is no wonder that sometimes he be put to use  
*Peters* divinity, to cry forth, *Depart from me, for I*  
*am a sinfull man* ; but when he improverth the sight  
 most fully, his case is, to have his soul transported,

and as it were, in a holy extasie of love, toward that precious and matchless One.

And there is this last advantage that a Christian hath by being convinced of original sin, It is that which putteth a Christian to a holy diffidence in his own strength, and maketh him to be much in the employment of the strength of him whose name is *Jehovah*. What is the reason that Christians commit a breach of that first Command, so much trusting to their own strength, and not making mention of *his righteousness*, and laying hold upon *his strength, even upon his only*? It is this, because we do not dwell under the constant impression of original corruption. We conceive it is as great a mystery to mens judgement, as it is a mystery to their practice, to mortifie it. What made *Paul* so much to cry forth, *Rom. 7. 18.* to disclaim his own ability, and *ver. 23.* was it not the conviction of original sin which was within him?

Now, that which we shall secondly speak unto shall be this, to presse a little upon you the necessity of the mortification of original sin: and we conceive these things point out its necessity; first, this. That all mortification is in vain, and as the beating of the air, untill once original corruption be mortified: What is all your mortification without this it is, as it were, the lopping off of the branches while the root doth remain intire, it is a damming up of the streams, while the fountain is still running; and no doubt, that mortification will easily grow vain: you must once mortifie this which is the mother of sin. And we would only say this by the way, that under correction, we conceive, the

original

Original sin is not , nor cannot well be mortified in the body, but only is to be mortified in the members, that is we must study to mortifie such a part of original sin, to mortifie some living lusts, which are within us , and to be groaning under the rest ; for we conceive , it is hard to take up the whole body of original sin , and to make that the subject of mortification, or to lament over it.

There is this secondly , which speaks forth the necessity of Mortification of original sin , it is that which is an undeniable evidence of a Christian, to be taken up in the mortifying of this sin ; for we conceive it to be impossible for a hypocrite to attain to such a length , as to study the real mortification of original corruption : It was the practice of these two holy men , the Apostle *Paul* , Rom. 24. and of *David* , Psal. 51. 5. where they sit down to lament over the iniquity which was within them. And the reason why the mortification of original sin, is an undeniable character and evidence of a Christian, is not only from this, that one that grieveeth about the mortification of original sin , is a Christian that hath most distinct discoveries of himself , as likewayes some discoveries of the holiness and spotlesness of God. It is hard to be convinced of original sin by the light of nature , if at all, for to us it is a question, if he can be , which the Apostle seemeth to intimate , Rom. 7. 7. Saying, *I had not known lust , except the Law had said , Thou shalt not covet.*

There is this , thirdly , which speaks forth the necessity of the mortification of original corruption, that all the duties that proceed from a Christian,





be much in the exercise of self examination, and when he shall reflect upon himself, he will behold the invisible motions of iniquity unto every sin that hath been named among the Gentiles: who so great a stranger unto his own heart, but if he will reflect upon it, may sometimes see the stirrings of unknown (almost) corruptions? which speaketh that aloud to the Christian, that there is a fountain and spring within him, that would send forth such bitter waters, except they were graciously restrained.

There is this secondly, by which a Christian may be brought to the conviction of original sin, and it is, to be much in the exercise of the study of the spirituality of the law, which was the way that Paul attained to the conviction of original sin, *Rom. 7*. It is that compendious cut, by which one may behold that holiness of God who imposeth a command, not only to desist from the actings of sin, but to desist also from the first motions and lusts of sin.

There is this lastly, a Christian would be much in the exercise of prayer, for that spirit who convinceth the world of sin, that what you do not know as of your selves, he who is the great convincer of the world, may imprint those convictions upon your souls, which may make you sit down and bewail your selves, in the bitterness of your spirit. And we shall at this time shut up our discourse; only we would say to these who are entertaining this holy warfare against their corruptions, that they should not be much discouraged, though they see not sensible victory: you must know that sin must be with you while you have a being: we may

certainly allude unto that word, *Dan. 7. 12.* and may say, that the dominion of your sins shall be taken away, though their lives shall be prolonged for a time and for a season. As likewises we would say this for your encouragment, who have your corruptions stirring most within you, that ordinarily Sathan when he is in the way to remove, they stirreth and acteth most; as it is observed, that the last beating of the pulse in a dying man is most strong, so the beating of corruption, when it is going to be cast out, may be most violent. And we shall only give the reason, why Christians are not much affected with this, that the day is coming when once they shall prevail over their corruptions, and shall tread Sathan under their feet; why the feet of those who bring such glad tidings are not beautiful upon the mountains? And we conceive that it doth either proceed from this, that Christians are not seriously engaged in this holy warfare, for that is most certain, that if you were fighting day by day, then the hope of victory, and of a blessed issue would be as glad tidings from a far country, and should be as cold water unto a thirsty soul, that though your hope were deferred untill your hearts were sick, yet the accomplishment of your desires should be sweet to your souls: or else it doth proceed from this, that Christians do not believe this truth, that there is an issue and a period of their fight; if once you could be brought to this length to seal this truth, that that victory shall be once heard in heaven, *Speak comfortably to Jerusalem, for her warfare is accomplished,* if we may add unto these words; or if a Christian be seriously debating



ebating with his lusts, and hath also the faith of his truth in some measure, then it doth proceed chiefly from this, want of the distinct perswasions of our interest, and want of the assurance of our peace with him; for as long as a Christian is under debate concerning his eternal rest, he cannot be much affected with joy, under the declaration of these means, that there is a period of their fight, and that they who have been made partakers of the first resurrection, over them the second death shall have no power. ! what a blessed day suppose ye shall that be, when our feet shall stand within the gate of the new Jerusalem, when you shall receive these two precious badges and eternal trophies of your victory, *a crown put upon your head*, of infinit more value than all material crowns, and *a palm put in your hand*. We conceive, it is impossible to determine, what joy shall accrue to a Christian upon the reflect thoughts of this, that he hath trode Sathan under his feet, and hath bruised the head of him, who hath so not bruised his heel: And as for those who are strangers (as the most part of us are) unto this spiritual warfare, be convinced of this, that within three score and fewer years God shall enter into an eternal warfare with you, where there shall be no cessation of armes, neither shall there be any inter-doption. It is better to fight with your lusts, than to fight with *a living and eternal God*, when he shall declare himself to be your opposite and enemy. Sathan once was made perfect, but he did find out many inventions, and amongst all those inventions he found that accursed one, how there might be a separation betwixt him and the *living God*; and  
except

except *He* whose name is *Prudence*, and hath found out the knowledge of many witty inventions, ha found out that precious invention of reconciling sinners unto God, we should have been *Magor Mabsabib*, terrors to our selves. O! that you might be perswaded once to contend with your lusts, that ye may endure the heat of the day, and the cold of the night, in wrestling against sin; know this, that *sin goeth not out, by fasting and prayer*; it is so straitly united unto us, it is easier for a camel to pass thorow the eye of a needle, than for many of us to mortifie our corruptions. We shall shut up all that we would say in this one word, be perswaded of this, that the day is approaching and near at hand, when our *blessed Lord Jesus* shall come with ten thousands of his Saints: what if this were the day (O unmortified sinners!) that ye should behold that white Throne fixed in the clouds, and ye should have a summons given into your hands without continuation of dayes, to appear before his Tribunal? What could ye answer when ye are reproved? Would not silence and confession be your best defence? Certainly there is an eternal curse to be pronounced against those who do not exercise themselves unto this precious act of Godliness, of *crucifying the flesh, which the lusts and affections thereof*. There is a law of death over your head, and there is a law of sin, which is within your hearts, and ye shall be eternally subjects unto these two Laws, except the *Law of the spirit of life* do make you free.

SERMON  
and  
wit

## S E R M O N V.

al. 5. 25. *And they that are Christs have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.*

**T**He walk of a Christian, who hath *Christ* in him the hope of glory, is most sublime, and it being from spiritual principles, for spiritual ends, is also according to a spiritual rule. The walk of a Christian is from *faith* and *love* in *Jesus Christ*, as that predominant principle; nay more, from the spirit of *Christ*, living in the soul of a Christian by faith, and dwelling in it by love, which is that *primum mobile*, and first wheel of all its motions; as likewise, it is for a spiritual end, it being for the glory of *God*, and to subordinate unto this, their own salvation and advantage: they are not like *Ephraim* empty vines bringing forth fruit unto themselves, but it is their design to make *Christ* all, and themselves nothing, though it be natural unto a man to desire himself, and to make himself the first *Alpha* of his doings, and the last *Omega* of all his performances: as likewise, it is according to a spiritual rule, it being conformed unto that precious word of life, which is perfect in it self, and leadeth man unto perfection. But this is a lamentation, and shall be for a lamentation, that we love to take such a liberty to our selves, and such a latitude in our way and walk to heaven. There is much fear and complaint amongst many, for the losse of their civil liberties, and that they are detained captives in their own hands by the hand of strangers, but there is a captivity and bondage that is lesse lamented, and yet more



more intolerable, and that is, the bondage of *sin and iniquity*, that though we should expire and spend seventy years ( which is one of the utmost lines of our life ) under this captivity, yet we should not cry forth, *Return our captivity, as the rivers of the south*. Are there not many amongst us, who ly with as much contentment under the bonds of their sin, and fetters of their iniquity, as if they were chains of Gold, and ornaments of fine gold? Mortification is a mystery unto our practice: That which was a paradox to *Saul*, that *a man should find his enemy and yet keep him alive*, that paradox is often committed in these dayes, when we do not study to crucifie the lusts and affections of our hearts. I think, Christians in these dayes, when they reflect upon those unmortified corruptions that are within them, must be constrained to cry forth, that all their hope doth consist in this, *that a living dog is better than a dead Lyon*, and that their confidence is terminate upon this, that yet they are within this side of eternity. We love singularity in opinion, but hate singularity in practice, though the one, no doubt, is much more commendable than the other. May we not wish for two moneths, wherein we may go unto the mountains and bewail our virginity. that we have not been espoused unto that precious and excellent one *Jesus Christ*, and that we have not been endeavouring to conform our selves unto his blessed and precious image? We confesse this may be a mystery to many every day, that they are not eternal monuments of the justice and indignation of *God*, and that somewhat of *Cains* divinity doth not possess our hearts, that *whosoever shall find us*,

*and shall kill us.* We would only say this, that ye would be as much in the exercise of the mortification of your invisible lusts, as ye are in the exercise of the mortification of your visible lusts and iniquities.

At the last occasion that we spoke upon these words, we told you that the second thing that was held forth concerning Mortification, was the extent of it, that a Christian ought to mortifie not only original corruption, but also his predominant lusts, and the first motions and occasions unto sin. Concerning the mortification of original sin, we have spoken somewhat, and shall insist no further: only we would say this, that we laid down this as a conclusion, that original sin could not be mortified in its body, but only was to be mortified in its members, and the ground of this assertion we conceived to be this, because it is impossible for a Christian to take up original sin in its body, as is clear from *Jer. 17. 9.* where it is said, *that the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it?* It is above the reach of any man to fathom and comprehend the deceitfulness of his own heart. It is a mystery that was never unfolded, and as long as we are within time, cannot be unfolded. We would only say this, that a Christian who is convinced of original sin, that there is the spawn and seed of every imaginable corruption within him, will be much in the magnifying of restraining grace, and will sit down, and pen a song of praise unto the unsearchable grace of *Christ*, who hath redeemed them. I confess, that which makes Christians have so much to do with pardoning grace,

grace, which was *Dauids* practice, 1 Sam. 25. 32. and  
 We may call original sin *Gad*, for after, it cometh all w  
 forth a *Troup*, *chorus vitiorum*, a troupe of vices ; i inan  
 is that fruitful womb that doth alwayes bear *Twins* high  
 And we conceive, that Christians who are so called, pass  
 ought to be much in the study of original sin, It is ride  
 a wonder, that we walk with such woful contentmgs,  
 ment to heaven, and to that imagined happiness, efs o  
 which we suppose to have : can such a delusion and b  
 this overtake you, that you can *reap in joy*, who ation  
 never did *sow in tears*, and that you can returne, eopl  
 bringing *sheaves in your bosome*, who never went, oth  
 forth bearing *precious seed* ? we think to climb to, ay  
 heaven by that short ladder of presumption : into  
 would say it, and wishes that you may consider it, red  
 we are afraid that there shall be many woful and, ulne  
 sad disappointments of many of our hopes, and we n re  
 shall be constrained to reject our confidence : we studi  
 separat those things which *God* hath conjoyned, ar g  
 we either pursue for holiness without justification, nd  
 or else we pursue for justification without holiness. ant

Now in speaking upon the mortification of pre-  
 dominant lusts, which are here called *affections*, be-  
 cause the spirit of a Christian, and of any, are most f th  
 strongly united unto these, we shall not insist to N  
 prove this unto you, that it is the duty of a Chri- worl  
 stian, or of any, to mortifie their predominant lusts, e th  
 it is clear from *Matth.* 18. 8, 9. Where we are, tian  
 commanded to *pluck out our right eye, if it offend us*, his p  
 the meaning of which is this, that if we had a lustion  
 as dear to us as our right eye, if it hurt and offend T  
 us, we should pluck it out ; and from *Mark.* 9. 45. hat  
 and 47. and from *Col.* 3. 5. where we are com- on c  
 manded



32anded to *mortifie our inordinat affections*. Neither  
et all we insist much upon that distinction of predom-  
inant lusts, that there are some predominant lusts,  
ins which are more pure and refined, which ordinari-  
ed passe under the notion and vail of vertue; as  
ride, when it is mixed with prudence in its act-  
ings, passeth under the vail of generosity, and high-  
ness of spirit and prodigality when it is not sensual  
and brutish, passeth under the notion of mortifi-  
cation to the world; and Sathan in tempting  
people to the acting of these predominant lusts,  
doth not only study to gain the affections, but like-  
ways studieth to gain our light and our judgement  
into the acting of these things: There are some  
predominant lusts which are more grosse; the sin-  
fulness of which is more easily discerned, and Sathan  
in tempting people to the acting of these lusts,  
studieth mainly to gain the affection, which in so  
far gaineth the judgement, as it sets about to devise  
and meditate upon the way, how such predomi-  
nant lusts may be effectuat and accomplished. O!  
but the mind of man will plot subtil iniquity, and  
the affection and heart will execute the plottings  
of the minde, with greatest carefulness and sedulity.  
Now that which first we shall speak upon the  
work of mortification of predominant lusts, shall  
be this, what are these disadvantages that a Chri-  
tian hath by not studying to mortifie and crucifie  
his predominant lusts, but giving way and conces-  
sion to them to live.

The first disadvantage we conceive to be this,  
that a Christian who is not much in the mortificati-  
on of his predominant lusts, doth hinder much of  
that

that precious fellowship and divine familiarity which should be betwixt *God* and him ; the giving way to the King of our lusts to live, separates friends and that word is true, *that a brother offended is harder to be won , than the bars of a strong castle.* Now this is clear from *Ezek. 14. 5.* where it is said, *The are estranged from me by their idols : as likewise ver. 7. of that chapter, Every one that separateth himself , whether of Israel or of a stranger, and setteth up idols in his heart , Separation from God , and that woful idolatry , are two inseparable companions as likewise , it is clear from *Ezek. 44. 10.* where these are conjoyned again ; and *Isa. 59. 2.* *Your iniquities have separated betwixt you and me.* And I would only say this , that a Christian who can to his apprehension , find some sweetness and enjoyment of *God*, without the exercise of mortification may question much the reality of his enjoyment . And it is certain , that the entertaining of predominant lusts , doth exceedingly interrupt communion and fellowship with *God*, not only because of this , that predominant lusts, when they are in exercise , do exceedingly weaken a Christian in diligence , and in his zeal and fervency in going about these duties, by which communion with *God* is attained : Some folks predominant lusts have gotten such advantage over them, that they will almost cease to pray without conviction , or if they be convinced , their convictions will suddenly vanish : but also because of this, that when a predominant lust is in its vigorous exercise , then a Christian loseth much of the impression of the sweetness of communion and fellowship with *Christ**

! but *Christ* might live long in heaven, ere we  
 ve him a visit; we think we could be happy  
 ithout him, and that is but an imaginary delusion  
 our lying lusts.

There is this second disadvantage that a Chri-  
 an hath by not studying to crucify his predomi-  
 ant lusts, and its this, that such a Christian doth  
 ot receive any return of prayer, and God doth  
 deny to him the answer of his desires. This is clear  
 om *Ezek. 20. 31.* where he saith, *Do ye pollute your*  
*lves with your Idols, and come and enquire at me? As*  
*live, saith the Lord, I will not be enquired of by you.*  
 and this was the divinity of that blind man, *John*  
*9. 31. God heareth not sinners:* And it was the divini-  
 of *David, Psal. 66. If I regard iniquity in my heart,*  
*God will not hear my prayer:* and most clearly, *Isa.*  
*59. 2. where their iniquities doth cause him deny*  
*to hear their suites.* O! but there are many Inhibi-  
 ons served in heaven against the Professors of this  
 eneration, that they should pray and not be heard,  
 and should cry and yet not have access: And cer-  
 ainly it is no wonder, that such prayers as we pre-  
 ent unto God, while our predominant lusts are in  
 exercise, be not heard; we pray to God with such  
 indifference and formality, as in a manner, we turn  
 ver our prayer unto a complement to salute God  
 ith in the morning, and to take our farewell of  
 im at night; we know not much more use of  
 many of our prayers, and hence it is that he deny-  
 th to us the answer of them. I would only speak  
 his to you, let Christians hearts first speak the  
 words which they are to speak in prayer, and  
 then let their words speak their heart, that their  
 heart



heart may endite that which is the matter of their desires.

There is this third disadvantage that a Christian hath by entertaining his predominant lusts, and it is this, it doth exceedingly interrupt a Christian's motion unto heaven: how far have you gone these many dayes, or these many years? the motion of Christians is retrograde in these dayes, they go backward, but do not go on from strength to strength. O! that we might give obedience to that command, which is, *Heb. 2. 4. Let us lay aside every weight and sin that doth beset us, and run with patience the race that is set before us*; more Mortification would make more motion towards heaven then we do attain to.

There is this fourth disadvantage that a Christian hath by entertaining his predominant lusts, and it is this, that when predominant lust is not mortified, then any corruption that is within you, will easily be discovered in the day of trial; the Lord oft-times taketh that revenge upon many, that because they would not mortifie at home, he will write their iniquities in legible letters upon their foreheads, that those that run may read them: and if Christians believed this more, that God may be provoked to write your lusts that are not mortified, in capital letters upon your forehead, it might provoke you more to be in this exercise: This is clear, *Ezek. 16. 36. compared with 37. ver. where their entertaining of their Idols, is threatned with this curse that he will discover their nakednesse, and make the shame thereof to appear.*

There is this fifth disadvantage that a Christian

ath by it, and it is this ; that in the day, when he shall be passing thorow the valley of the shadow of death, and shall be looking long and endless eterni-ty in the face then a predominant lust unmortified will be ill company , and will raise a storm within the conscience, which will not easily be appeased : There are not many of us fit for eternity, neither do we live as though we were dayly to die. If you would walk with peace thorow the first and second gates of death, study the Mortification of your lusts : O ! but at the singing of that triumphant song. *O death where is thy sting ? and O grave where is thy victory ?* shall not the soul be fraughted with divine consolation and unspeakable joy ?

There is this last disadvantage that waits upon the Christian , and it is this, that such a one doth exceedingly marre all the performances which he goeth about, and ( as it were ) leaveth a print of his hands upon these most holy and excellent duties. A Christian who hath a predominant lust , and is not studying to mortifie it , his gifts prayes more than his grace : as likewayes, he is more in seeking the approbation of men , than the praise of God : A Christian that doth not study to mortifie his lusts, he is more in seeking the ornaments of Christianity, then the substance of it : I think, the vitals and essentials of Christianity are much exhausted and spent ; and there are some few bones left, rather the picture and anatomy of a Christian , than really such a one ; As likewayes there is this , one who doth not study to mortifie his predominant lusts , he will not make conscience of obeying the commandment of faith ; And this likewayes waits

on him, much hardness and impenitency of heart. **O!** but oft-times through the deceitfulness of sin, our heart becometh as a stone within us, and we are delivered unto the hands of our iniquities.

Now that which secondly, we shall speak to, upon the Mortification of predominant lusts, shall be this: what is that profound subtilty and desperate deceitfulness that Sathan useth in tempting people to the acting of their predominant lusts: we have many thousand years experience, that he is a lyar, and a murderer from the beginning, though we believe the flatteries of sin, as though our iniquities were of good report and of known integrity. He never did deceive: and we conceive, that Sathan's subtilty doth appear in these, first, his subtilty doth appear in this, that ordinarily when a Christian, or any is in a most secure and presumptuous frame, then Sathan acts and tempts a Christian to the acting of his predominant lust; when *Christ* is away, then he doth assail; this is most clearly pointed at *Luk. 22. 31*, compared with *33. vers.* where *Christ* saith to *Peter*, *Sathan hath desired to sift thee as wheat* and if ye will read the *33. vers.* ye will behold *Peters* frame, that he was in a high string of presumption, though all men should forsake thee, yet *ord* will not do it: as likewise it is clear from *2 Sam. 11. 2.* where when *David* was lying upon his bed, and walking upon the roof of his house, then is he tempted to the acting of the sin of uncleanness. Sathan studieth to catch his advantage, especially at that time, when we are most prone to embrace sin, and most unapt to resist; therefore it should be a Christians endeavour to exercise watchfulness, and to stand upon his watch tower. Then



There is this secondly wherein his subtilty doth  
 appear, that ordinarily he doth propose the imagi-  
 nary advantage of imbracing of such a lust; and doth  
 infect our affections with the pleasure of it, but doth  
 not make mention of the disadvantage and infinit  
 hurt, that doth appear and come from such a lust :  
 This was clear in his first temptation with our first  
 father, he makes mention of this, *If thou eat of the  
 forbidden fruit, thou shalt be as God*, but no mention  
 made of this, that he should be *a sinner* : and most  
 clearly in *Matth. 4. 8.* where Sathan sheweth unto  
 that holy and spotless one, *all the Kingdoms of the  
 world, with the glory of them*, and these things he  
 promised to give *Christ*, and shewed him the glory  
 of the kingdoms of the world, but did not shew to  
 him, the vexation and toil of these kingdoms; and  
 no doubt, the one is much more then the other :  
 The hook wherewith he studieth to take us, is  
 garnished over with the bait of imaginary dignity,  
 with transient pleasures, and with passing vani-  
 ties. O ! that we were wise as serpents, to know  
 the depths of Sathan, that we might not be ensnar-  
 ed, nor taken by entisements.

There is this thirdly wherein it appeareth, that  
 ordinarily he studieth either to extenuate the sin-  
 fulness of sin, that a Christian may be brought to  
 call all this but a *Zoar*; or else he studieth to prove  
 the consistency betwixt such a sin, and the reality  
 of the grace of God : and when once a Christian  
 is brought to such a length, as to debate the reality  
 of the grace of Gods consistency, with the acting of  
 such a lust, they are near a fall, for then they cry  
 forth, *Master, pardon me when I shall bow my knee in*  
*the*

the house of Rimmon, and when my Master leaneth upon my hand: they then take an indulgence and a latitude to themselves, to commit that iniquity.

There is this fourthly wherein his subtilty doth appear, that oft times he will restrain the temptations to the acting of your predominant lusts, and withdraw the objects of them, that either you may be put off your watch, or which is more ordinary, that lusts may take life, when the object of lust is withdrawn: And that is most certain, that lust oft times groweth most when there are fewest temptations to assail it; for upon the absence of our Idols our love to these things doth increase; a lusty *Amnon* will wax lean every day, when he wants the object whereupon to feed.

There is this fifthly wherein his subtilty doth evidently appear, that ordinarily he will tempt people to the acting of these sins, that are introductive, and bring on the acting of their predominant lusts: he will tempt one that is given to uncleanness, to pride, idleness, fulness of bread: And certainly one who is given to the evil of pride, he will tempt him to the smaller actings of these sins, that so he may ascend by degrees: he will study to seise upon the out-forts of the soul, that so he may gain the affections: he will break the Covenant that we have made with our eyes, that so we may break the Covenant that we have made with our hearts.

There is this lastly, wherein his subtilty doth appear, that ordinarily he will tempt people to the acting of their predominant lust under the vail of vertue, and things commendable, as, he will tempt one to Covetousness upon this account, that they

may be capacitate to be charitable to the poor, and may be useful to these who want in their generation : he will tempt one to sin, as is clear, *Rom. 3. 6.* That the grace of *Christ* may be more conspicuous in pardoning them : he tempted *Christ* to presumption under the vail of faith, as is clear *Matth. 4. 6.* If thou be the Son of God, cast thy self down, and the ground he giveth is, For it is written, He shall give his Angels charge concerning thee, &c. And likewises he tempts many to the acting of Misbelief, under the vail of humility, knowledge, and distinct apprehensions of God.

That which thirdly we shall speak to, shall be, to give you some evidences whether or not ye have attained unto the mortification of your predominant lusts, and whether indeed you have sung a song of triumph over them, and having spoken somewhat of this before, we shall not insist much upon it : Only we would say these three things, 1. That a Christian that can reflect upon lusts which he supposeth to be mortified with delight, and want of the exercise of grief, may suspect the reality of his mortification. O ! but one that can meditate upon his predominant lust which he supposed was mortified, and yet not be constrained to cover himself with ashes, and to put sackcloth upon his loins, may cry forth, *Miserere mei, have pity upon me.*

And there is this second evidence that your predominant lust is not mortified, when you are not diligent and carefull to eshew all things that lead unto the acting of that predominant sin : If ye be not giving obedience unto that command, 1 *Thes. 22. Abstain from all appearance of evil*, you may

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question



question the reality of your Mortification. It is an excellent practice of a Christian, to be as much under the impression of the sinfulness of predominant lust and sin, after it is mortified, and to be as much in pursuing it, as when it is in its vigorous exercise and life with you.

And there is this lastly, which may evidence it, and it is, when one can upon suitable and convenient occasions of acting such a predominant sin, have their lust set on fire, and endeavour to act it, they may question the reality of their Mortification. I know the great bond which restraineth many from the acting of their predominant lust, is not the apprehension of the *holiness of God*, but the want of secrecy: O! but if we had secrecy, we would not mourn much for these sins which we commit in secret, neither would we be much in desisting from the acting of these things, unto which our lust doth lead us. It was certainly a commendable practice of one, who being tempted unto the sin of uncleanness, did condescend to satisfy the desire of one that did pursue her, upon this condition, that he would bring her unto a place where nothing should behold her; which he attempting to do, and bringing her to the most retired imaginable place, she then most piously uttered forth these words *doth not God behold us*, which words had influence upon him to whom they were spoken, that he desisted from further prosecuting such woful and carnal designs. O! but the apprehension of the omniscience of God, would keep us much to the crucifying of our most predominant lust.

an We shall shut up our discourse at this time, only  
 chre shall say a little unto those who are guilty of  
 what predominant lust of *Covetousness*, which we  
 conceive is not only a predominant lust, but an  
 universal lust: *Sin* is an universal *King* over the  
 most absolute Monarch, and over every one that sits  
 upon the dunghill. And we conceive that *covetous-*  
*ness* is one of *sins* greatest *Princes*, acting under this  
 absolute Monarch, and having manyest subjects.  
 and we would only propose these things, by which  
 you may be helped to mortifie such a lust and idol.  
 ! meditate much upon the disadvantages attend-  
 ing this idol of covetousness; we conceive the  
 disadvantages thereof are clearly pointed forth,  
 we *Tim. 6. 9, 10.* where the Apostle *Paul* enumer-  
 weth four disadvantages of that sin of covetousness.  
 1. That it is that, which maketh people erre from the  
 faith, 2. It drowneth them in destruction and perdition.  
 3. It is the root of all evil. And lastly It pierceth them  
 through with many sorrowes. And for those whose god  
 is the world, we would only propose this considerati-  
 on to them, which we conceive hath most influence  
 upon such, be perswaded of this, that *covetousness*  
 will abbreviat and shorten your life, as is clear, *Jam.*  
*th. 3.* where this is one property of this idol of co-  
*vousness*, that it shall eat up your flesh as it were fire.  
 it is not an unsensible cutting short of your life,  
 but most sensibly it will abbreviat, and bring you  
 to the midst of your dayes to your long and ever-  
 lasting home. And there is this disadvantage of it  
 also, that *covetousness* is that sin, which doth most  
 directly commit a breach of the first command, *Thou*  
*alt have no other gods before me*, as is clear *Col. 3.*  
 where this sin of covetousness is called Idolatry,

and covetousness which is Idolatry. And certainly what are those things that you pursue after, but white and yellow dust and glistening clay; the excellency of which we conceive, doth consist as much (in the estimation of men) in the rarity of these things, as in any intrinsical and internal worth and excellency: And how contemptible a thing riches and the world is, doth not this speak it, that when there is abundance of these things, they become contemptible? as is clear from that word that *Solomon made silver as stones in the streets of Jerusalem*, which doth not only speak out this, the abundance of these things in his dayes, but likewise it speaketh forth this, that abundance of these things maketh them contemptible, and moveth us to undervalue them; And that which *Solomon* hath *Prov. 23. 5. Why settest thou thy heart on that which is not, for riches take to themselves wings and flee away*: e're long the world shall either leave you, or you shall leave the world.

Now we shall desire to shut up our discourse with this, that ye would seriously intend the mortification of your lusts, and that ye would be much in the employment of the spirit of *Christ*: *Christ* hath killed the damning power of sin, and hath promised to us the Spirit of Mortification, by which we may kill the dominion of sin: And certainly, Christian ought to act so in dependance upon the Spirit of *Christ*, as if they were meer patients and instruments under his hand: but withall we conceive, that in respect of activity and endeavours, Christian ought to act so, as if he acted independently from him, and did act all himself; but  
witha



withall in respect of self-denial, he ought so to act, as if he acted nothing at all, but the Spirit acted alone in him, and therefore should cry forth, after he hath done all, that *he is but an unprofitable servant*: O! that ye would be perswaded seriously to ponder and ballance these things, that except ye be the ruine of your iniquities, iniquity shall certainly be your ruine, and ye know not how long it is unto that day when that decree shall be past in heaven against you, *they are joyned to their Idols, let them alone*. I shall only say that word which John hath in his 1 Epistle. 5. last; *Little children, keep your selves from Idols*.

S E R M O N V I.

Gal. 5. 24. *And they that are Christs have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.*

**I**T is an unchangeable and unalterable decree of heaven which cannot be repealed, *that the wages of sin is death, and that which a man soweth, that shall he also reap*; Though we conceive, there are many that are possessed with this imaginary delusion, *that though they adde drunkenness to thirst, and do daily taste of that forbidden fruit, yet at last they shall obtain a place to walk in, amongst those that stand by*: They conceive, that there is a possible union of pure Religion and undefiled, and the want of Mortification; though we think that religion without mortification, is nothing else but the mortification of religion, and *the crucifying of Christ afresh*. Are there not many here, who in stead of traveling in birth, untill Christ be formed in them, are traveling

in birth, till they bring forth iniquity, and till the Image of that old man be fully framed in them. Now there is this that we would have you know and wish, that it were engraven upon the fleshly tables of your heart, as with a pen of iron, and the point of a diamond, that there are two Tribunals upon which *God* doth sit to judge: there is a Tribunal of Justice where all the sentences past, are pure, unmixed wrath, without all temperament or mixture of mercy; And before this Tribunal, all flesh must once appear, and receive that dreadful sentence of eternal separation from the Majesty of the Lord, and, if you do well, you must say *Amen* unto the equity of that sentence: but know this for your consolation, that this is not his last word. know that that Justice Court is but subordinat, & there is another higher, unto which we may appeal to have that sentence of Justice sweetly repealed. And is not this one mysterious depth of infinite love, that *Grace* should declare them righteous whom Justice hath condemned, and yet leave no imputation upon the Justice of God? that *love* should sweetly reduce decreets of Justice, and declare them in law to be void and null? this is the law of love. And is not this a mystery of infinite love, that that which is an abomination for man, to *justify the wicked*, should be love and Justice in God, to *justify the ungodly*? And is not this a wonder, that though *there be no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus*, yet there should be many things condemnable in them, and that divine love should make such an abstraction, as to make a separation betwixt many things that are condemnable, and

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condemnation? *Justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne*, yet *mercy and truth go before it*, and cometh nearest sinners, to make ready their way, that they may speak with Justice. There is this that we would have you know, that in the accomplishment of this work of mortification, ( of which we have been speaking at many occasions ) a Christian hath that same power communicable unto him for the overcoming of his temptations, which *Christ* had in the overcoming of principalities and powers: this is clear, *Eph. 19. 20.* And certainly, sometimes when a Christian doth reflect upon those living and strong corruptions that are within him, he wil have much of that fear which *Elisha's* servant had, who cryed out, *Master what shall we do?* but if our eyes were opened, we should see that there are more for us, nor against us: put on much of that divine generosity of *Nehemiah* ( if we may allude unto it in this combate of faith ) *Should such a one as I flee?* however, keep a midst betwixt discouragment, and anxious Misbelief: And I would only give Christians who are indeed ingaged in this holy warfare, that counsel which *Ahab* gave to *Benhadad*, *1 King. 20. 11.* *Let not him that putteth on his armour, boast as he that putteth it off*, let confident faith be mixed with holy fear, that there may be a sweet mixture of these two. And there is this which we would speak to you, that there is a difference betwixt the grant and gift of pardon, and the intimation of pardon unto a Christian: yea more, there is a difference betwixt the intimation of pardon, even for a sin mortified and repented for, and the divine application of it: this is clear by comparing *2 Sam. 12.*



13. with *Psal.* 51. where Nathan saith to David 3.  
*thy iniquities are blotted out, and thy sin is taken away* ben  
 There is both the grant of pardon, and the inti  
 mation of it, and yet he himself, *Psal.* 51. praye  
 for the application of pardon; pardon was not ap  
 plied, though it was intimated: and this woul  
 speak this to us, that we would not alwayes con  
 clude from the want of the sensible convictions o  
 pardon, the want of the grant of pardon.

But now to come to that at which we left at the  
 last occasion which was the extent of Mortificati  
 on, that a Christian ought not only to mortifie ori  
 ginal sin, but his predominant lusts also, with al  
 the motions and occasions unto the aising of these  
 sins. Concerning the mortification of original sin  
 which is here called *the flesh*, we have spoken al  
 ready, and have spoken somewhat concerning the  
 mortification of predominant lusts and presumpt  
 uous sins; It is turned now to be an improper  
 expression, to make mention of a predominant  
 grace that should stand in opposition to predomi  
 nant lusts: I would only say this, that under the  
 law, there is no expresse mention made for any sa  
 crifice for presumptuous sins, unto which the *Apostle*  
 doth allude, *Heb.* 10. 26. *If a man sin wilfully after*  
*he hath received the knowledge of the truth, their re*  
*maineth no more sacrifice for sin.* And certainly thi  
 may make us astonished to entertain our predomi  
 nant sins, and our presumptuous iniquities, to en  
 tertain them so, as not to debate and wrestle with  
 them, for they turn not unto presumptuous sins  
 except we go such a length: therefore we should  
 be much in presenting that supplication, *Psal.* 19

3. *Keep back thy servant from presumptuous sins, let them not have dominion over me.*

Now that which we shall speak to first, shall be this, what are the most effectual and spiritual means, by which a Christian may be helped to the mortifying of his predominant lusts? And before we speak of them, we shall only say this, that this generation desireth rather to know what to do, then to do and practice what they know: we think to win to heaven by knowledge; though we confess we will not win to heaven without it, yet there is more requisit in a Christian.

The first way how a Christian will be helped to mortifie his predominant lusts, is this, for a Christian to be much in the exercise of secret prayer. And I would say this, he is a blessed Christian who ever won to the mortification of the least strength of a lust by publick prayer, whether more publick, or in families, or with society: pride and self-seeking, is that Caterpillar and worm that eats up the fruit of these addresses unto God; but if you were much in secret prayer alone, it would be a commendious way to attain to the mortification of your lusts, that when a Messenger of Sathan buffets you, ye may go to the Throne thrise and beseech the Lord, that this evil may depart from you, this is clear, not only, *Eph. 6. 18.* where amongst all the rest of the spiritual armour of a Christian, prayer is made mention of; *Pray with all prayer and manner of supplication*: it is clear, *Jam. 5. 17.* *If any man be afflicted, let him pray*: and, *2 Cor. 12. 7, 8* the words that we were speaking just now. O! whether is that *washing of our bed with tears*, and that

presenting of supplications with sighs and groans that cannot be expressed now gone? There are few Christians, but can make language of their grief whose grief of heart goes never to such a length, wa they may cry forth, *I am so troubled that I cannot speak*. He were indeed a Phoenix of his time, who could without lying to the *Holy Ghost*, say, that his bones were waxing old through his roaring all the day; and we would only say to such, that are not endeavouring after this, you shall go down to your graves, having your bones full of the sins of your youth.

There is this second mean that we would speak to, That a Christian would be much in the exercise of the grace of watchfulness; This is clear from *Luk. 21.* near the close, and from *Matth. 26. 41* *Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.* And certainly, watchfulness is a most requisite peece of armour, that after we have done all, we may stand not only because watchfulness is that which discovereth unto a Christian his weakness and inability, for a Christian to be convinced of this, it is his strength, as is clear from *2 Cor. 12. 10.* *When I am weak, then am I strong*: this is a paradox to nature but no mystery to grace; but also because watchfulness is a most effectual mean to discover to a Christian, the subtilty and profound deceitfulness of his adversaries, which maketh him to be much in watching over his own heart: watchfulness likewise is that grace, which discovereth unto a Christian, the formal and remiss actings of grace in this precious combat: when faith beginneth to die and hope beginneth to languish, and love and zeal beginne



beginneth to wax cold, then watchfulness giveth warning to prayer, that it may go to seek strength for those that were languishing: As likewayes watchfulness is requisit, because it discovereth unto a Christian, the first motions of his adversaries, and when first he beginneth to stir, which, no doubt, is a great advantage. And more, watchfulness discovereth unto a Christian, that advantage which he hath over his lusts, which doth exceedingly encourage him to go on in this spiritual warfare.

There is this thirdly, which is requisit, that a Christian would be much in the meditation upon the sufferings, death, and love of *Jesus Christ*. I know not (to a tender Christian) a more effectual mean to mortifie his affections and lusts, then this, this is clear that it is so, not only from 2 Cor. 5. 14, 15. where *Paul* saith, *The love of Christ did constrain him, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead, that we should henceforth no more live to our self.* And *Peter* presseth this, 1 Pet. 1. 18. compared with ver. 20. *Be ye holy as he is holy: and he subjoineth the reason of it, for ye are bought with a price, even with the incorruptible blood of Jesus Christ: and 1 Pet. 4. 1, 2. he presseth the doctrine of Mortification from this, that Christ was crucified in the flesh: and it is clear from Psal. 26. 3. where the great argument which perswaded David to pursue after sincerity, was this, for the love of God is alwayes before my eyes.* And is not this a sweet portraiture, alwayes to contemplat and behold, to look upon love, untill ye be changed into that same Image from glory to glory. And certainly *Christs* death and love must have a most effectual influence upon this:

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Can one read these words, *he sweat drops of blood* and that word, *If it be possible, let this cup depart from me*. Can you read these words and not be provoked to hate sin with a perfect hatred? Can ye love that which crucified *Christ*, and brought him so low? If such a supposition had been possible that all that were sinners had been standing round about the cross, in the day that *Christ* was hanged up betwixt heaven and earth, in the day that his precious body was dropping down drops of blood might not ye have said, O! what a thing must that be which we call sin, that hath brought him so low? And may not the reflect thoughts upon the love of *Christ*, provoke you to this, that if *Christ* hath so far condescended unto you, ought not ye to please him and give obedience to his Commandments; Who would dispute the commands of such a One? And it is certain, that if we would meditate on these things till we wondered, and wonder till we loved, no doubt, it should perswade you to be endeavouring Mortification of your lusts. *Christ's* death hath not only a moral influence (of which we have spoken) but it hath a physical influence also upon the mortification of sin: for *we are bought* (saith the Apostle Peter, 1 Pet. i. 20.) *with a price from our vain conversation: Christ* hath crucified the damning power of sin, and hath purchased this gift, the Spirit of Sanctification, to crucifie the dominion of sin.

There is this fourthly which is requisite, that a Christian under debates with lusts, be much in the exercise of the grace of faith: It is a most insensible and unknown help to our apprehension: we think  
faith

faith is a help, when all things are desperate. And therefore we judge prayer a more suitable help to overcome and apprehension; therefore a Christian under the prevailing of his corruptions, will be more in the employment of the grace of prayer, than in the employment of the grace of faith; though we may say this to the advantage of the grace of faith, that it hath a most effectual and most divine influence for the crucifying of lusts: if so we may speak, faith is that that cometh nearest *himself*; that is, for faith, (as it is spoken of it) hath a kind of omnipotency, as it is said, *all things are possible for those that believe*. Now this is clear not only from *Joh. 5. 5. This is our victory, whereby we overcome the world, even our faith*: and it is clear from *Eph. 6. 16. Above all things take ye the shield of faith, by which you may quench the fiery darts of the Devil*. And certainly had we so much faith, as a grain of mustard seed, we might say to every mountain that is in our way, *be removed, and hurled unto the midst of the sea, and it should obey us*. We shall clear the influence of faith in the mortifying of corruption, not only in this, that the grace of faith, discovereth unto a Christian that super-eminent and precious excellency of Jesus Christ, at the appearance of which, the glory and luster of our Idols do disappear. We think our Idols are like stars, that in the night do appear, and seem beautiful creatures, but when once that *Sun, even the Son of righteousness* doth arise, then their glory is not seen, neither can they be beheld. Saw you never such a sight of him, that constrained you to cry forth, *what have I to do any more with Idols*? If such a supposition were possible, that



that any idol should get entrance above it should get no entertainment there : for they are upheld by an infinit strength that cannot fail : As likewise, the influence of faith may be cleared in this, that it is that grace, that doth lay hold upon the promises, by which and thorow which, strength from the head is conveyed unto the combatant. For example, when a believer is wrestling with his lusts, faith layeth hold upon the promise of help and by it, layeth hold on *Jesus Christ*, who is the Promiser. As likewises the influence of Faith may be cleared in this, Faith is that grace, which discovereth to a Christian, that crown and recompense reward, one sight and view of which maketh love and zeal take fire, and maketh them to tread upon the high places of the earth, that when the Archers shoot at them, and do grievously wound them; yet their bow doth abide in its strength.

There is this mean likewises, by which a Christian would mortifie his predominant lusts, and in this, that he would be much in entertaining the grace of tenderness, *Joseph*-like to cry forth, when temptation doth assail him, *Shall I do this and sin against God*. I am perswaded that sin not resisted in its motions, doth procure hardness; And likewises we may say, that sin resisted in its beginnings, doth bring forth the grace of tenderness, in a most affectional and eminent way.

And there is this mean likewises which is requisite, that a Christian be much in the apprehension of death, judgement, and eternity : these three much meditated upon, would make us afraid to sin. I think a Christian never walketh as he ought, if

ye walk so, as if each moment next to that wherein  
 he liveth, he had the expectation of appearing be-  
 fore the judgement seat of *Christ*. O ! but it would  
 be a sad dispensation to many, to have this day a  
 summons without continuation of dayes, to appear  
 before that dreadful and terrible tribunal of *Jesus*  
*Christ*, when the books shall be opened, wherein  
 your wanderings are written, and the books of your  
 consciences shall be opened, that shall say *Amen* to  
 every thing that is recorded within the volume of  
 these books: this is clear from *Acts* 17. 30, 31. *He*  
*hath commanded all men every where to repent*, and the  
 argument enforcing it is, because *he hath appointed a*  
*day, in which he will judge the world by this man Je-*  
*sus Christ*: as likewayes it is clear in *Eccles.* 11. 9.  
 where *Solomon* presseth by way of holy Ironie ( for  
 so the scope is ) young men not to take their plea-  
 sures in the morning of their time, because for all  
 these things *God should bring them to judgement*. And  
 we wish that that *memento*, which did alwayes walk  
 with a holy man, might walk with you and sound in  
 your ears, *Awake, and come to judgement*, that it  
 may be that which may regulate your walk. I shall  
 not say much, but beware to entertain your lusts,  
 lest judgement overtake you, the stones of the wall  
 of this house shall bear witness against you in the  
 day of the *Lord* that ye have been invited to flee  
 from the wrath to come, and have refused the  
 precious offers of a crucified Saviour. We would  
 obtest and beseech you, that, if there be a heaven,  
 if there be a *God*, if there be an eternity, which are  
 most certain and infallible, if there be a hell, and  
 everlasting separation from the presence of the  
 Lord,

Lord, and if you have precious and immortal souls that you would tender your own salvation, and speak much of *Peters* divinity, *pity your selves*, for you are destroying your selves through the want of knowledge, and if we may say it, hell is enlarging it self wide for the receiving of many of the inhabitants of this place, and of many that live in this generation, who are destitute and void of the grace of the living God.

Now that which secondly we shall speak to shall be this, what are the evidences and tokens of this when lust hath dominion over one? And we shall shortly point out the evidences of lust, when it hath dominion: And we conceive, this first may evidence it, when one wins to such a length, as they can commit sin with delight, and with greediness, when it is pleasure to them to go after the heart of their detestable things, then sin hath dominion over one, as it is clear, sin hath dominion over those made mention of, *2 Pet. 2. 13. They account it pleasure to riot in the day time, and are sporting themselves with their own deceivings; such fools, as Solomon speaketh of, making a mock at sin: and likeways it is clear of those that are made mention of, Eph. 4. 19. They commit iniquity with greediness, and as the Prophet speaketh in another place, their hearts are mad upon their Idols.*

There is this secondly which may evidence it and it is this, when one sinneth with his predominant lust without conviction, or if they be convicted, their convictions do suddenly evanish, like those made mention of, *Jer. 6. 15. were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay, they were*



ere not at all ashamed, neither could they blush : They had won to such a length in impiety, that not only they would not do it, but they could not do it : and that same is made mention of, *Jer. 8. 12.* It is clear likewise, *Jer. 3. 3.* *Thou hadst a whores forehead, in thou refusedst to be ashamed ;* and from *Prov. 30. 20.* Where the adulterous woman saith, that *she hath done no wickedness.* When you are brought unto such a length of impiety, then know that you have yielded your selves servants unto unrighteousness for a time.

There is this which may evidence it likewise, and it is this, when one can commit iniquity upon small temptations, yea, upon none at all : this did prove that that sin of adultery had some dominion over *David*, when he did commit it upon so small or no temptation ; for this is brought in to aggravate it, *2 Sam. 12. 8.* *I gave thee thy Masters wives into thy bosom :* and it is most emphatically aggravated, *ver. 2.* *one poor man should have had one ewe lamb, and yet he had so many, and that yet he should pursue after that :* And most clearly, *Isa. 5. 18.* *Wo unto them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart-rope :* the meaning of these words we conceive it to be this, that they did most violently, without any allurement or entisement, pursue after the heart of their detestable things : certainly, those may suspect themselves, that upon the first presentation of an Idol, they presently bow down their heads and worship it.

There is this likewise which may evidence it, and it is this, when one notwithstanding of the convictions of the omniscience of God that doth  
 behold

behold them, will commit such an iniquity: doubt, then sin is brought unto a most damnable and most atrocious height: then sin had dominion over *Er*, Gen. 38. 7. *He did evil in the sight of the Lord*: the meaning of which word we conceive be this, that he did the evil, notwithstanding he was convinced of the omniscience and all-seeing eye of *God*: And it is recorded of *Ahab*, 1 King 21. 20. *He sold himself to commit iniquity in the sight of the Lord*, when notwithstanding he knew that he had seven eyes that ran to and fro through the earth yet he did all these abominations.

And there is this lastly, that doth evidence when one doth sin with much deliberation and advice, they are not overhauled by their temptations and lusts, and they sit down in counsel to consider how such a thing may be effectuate: then had iniquity dominion over those that are made mention of, *Mic. 2. 1. Wo to them that devise iniquity upon their beds*, that sit down deliberately in the silent seasons of the night to contrive the mischievous plots of their hearts: and we would only say to such read the 3, or 4. ver. of that chapter, where *God* saith in a sweet and just opposition, in regard to their devising of iniquity; *Behold* (saith he) *I will devise against this people*: *God* will deliberately and with much indignation, punish those that sin deliberately, and it is clear from, *Jer. 18. 12.*

Now we shall shut up our discourse at this time only we would speak a little unto this, why *God* do sometimes think fit to expose his own unto the dominion of their lusts? It was a notable and most true saying of a heathen, *As many vices, as masters*

masters, for every lust is a master; and we may say, every lust hath a servant, and some have ten thousand waiting on. And we conceive when a Christian beginneth to establish his own righteousness, then he is in hazard to be given up for a time unto the dominion of his sin: this is clear, *Ezek. 33. 13.* If he trust to his own righteousness, and commit iniquity; and there may be this reason of it, that they may know to distinguish, betwixt the yoke of *Christ*, and the yoke and bondage of sin, as it is pointed at, *Levit. 28. 47, 48.* And we conceive this may be a reason of it, because *God* intendeth to magnifie the glory of his unsearchable grace, by delivering them from the door of the pit, when this song shall be sung, *his my Son was dead, and is alive, and was lost, and found*: this is the song of restoring grace, after grace hath once prevented the Christian.

Now we will desire you seriously to intend this precious work of mortification: the most part of us leave idol-Christians, we have hands, and we do nothing, we have eyes and we see not, and we have feet and we walk not: And certainly, that practice and maxime of *Matchiavel* is much practised amongst us, he thought it was advantageous to have the possession of religion, and of vertue; but he thought it dangerous to have the reality of religion: there are many that desire to be clothed with the coat of *Christ*, that never desired conformity with *Christ* in the inward man: And we think if *Christ* were to come down from heaven, he might preach this to many of us, *Betrayest thou the son of man with a kiss?* There are many that I am sure have a lower spirit then *Judas*, that would sell *Christ* at a lower rate



rate then thirty pieces of silver : O ! eternity, eternity, *what shall you do in the day of desolation when your visitation shall come from a far ? where shall you flee for help ? and where shall you leave your glory ?* I shall shut up all that I have to say with this, the wrath of that living, but contemptible stone, that was cut out of the Mountains, shall be more intolerable than the weight of mountains and hills. Therefore the reprobates rather choose to be under the weight of hills and mountains, than to be under the weight of this living Cornerstone but so much despised. Will you not embrace him ? may not angels laugh at your folly, and have you in holy derision the triumph is above, and it is not long before his own shall cry forth, *It is finished.* And no doubt if we were much in the exercise of faith, we should easily accomplish this warfare : we may call Faith *Eliezer*, of whom it is reported, that he did so pursue his enemies, that the people returned to gather up the spoils. Love, prayer, and joy, will eternally triumph down and reap the sweet fruits of the victory of Faith. Now to him that can make you overcome through the blood of the Lamb, and the word of your testimony, we desire to give praise.

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## S E R M O N V I I.

Gal. 5. 24. *And they that are Christs have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.*

**I**T was a divine sentence of that Master of experiences, that *love covereth a multitude of sins*, we may say, that precious and infinite love, that Christ hath had to sinners, hath covered a multitude

*sins* : though this is a lamentation , and shall be a lamentation, that the most part of us have not come that length of religion, which the publicans and sinners did attain to, which is, *to love those that love them*. Doth not *Christ* his engraving of his love to sinners , in letters of blood, call for this at our hand , that we should devote our selves wholly to him ? But we confess, such is that desperat enmity and deceitfulness of the hearts of all flesh , that if those who have been partakers of the divine Nature, shall be partakers of it , had but one heart to conduct them to heaven , they would misguide it the way , it being the matchless and incommunicable prerogative of the *Captain of our salvation* to guide man's sons and daughters to glory. I think, there were a description to be given of the most part of us, we must give that which is, *Prov. 6. 13.* *He speaketh with his feet, and teacheth with his fingers* : and the great lesson that we would teach with our feet, and preach with our hands would be *iniquity, formality, and distance from God*. And I would have you who are expectants of heaven, and have some small hope of being eternally with him, to be much in this precious work of mortification. There are some so habituated to sin, ( if *God* do not prevent them ) the last act they shall commit in this stage of the world, shall be an act of iniquity, and they shall breath out their last , in departing from that *invisible Majesty*. There are some that though they live seventy years, they shall not have this to say, of one day of all their life, that they have devoted and given it to *God*. Mortification is a mystery to our knowledge, but much more a mystery

to our practice : It is a wonder that many of us are not distracted , and that much of *Cains* divinity doth not possess us , that *whosoever shall find us by the way , shall kill us*. However , unto those who make any conscience of this duty , we would say these two things ; 1. Ye may yeeld unto the premisses and assertions of misbelief, which they draw from the dominion of your sin over you, but deny the conclusions of misbelief : This was the practice of *David*, *Psal. 65. 3.* there is the assertion of misbelief in the first words , *iniquities prevail over me*, but he denyes that conclusion which we draw from it; *that we are reprobats*; but faith doth sweetly subjoyn, *As for our transgressions , thou wilt purge them away* This is bad Logick to deny the conclusion , but precious divinity : And secondly , we would say this to you , that ye may with a great deal of liberty, make use of the dominion of your iniquity, as an argument to plead with *God* for pardon , according to that famous prayer of *David*, *Psal. 25. 11.* *For thy names sake, O Lord, pardon mine iniquity, for it is great.* And we would say likewayes, that *God* maketh use of the iniquities of the children of men , as an argument to provoke himself unto mercy, and even those iniquities , which before he hath made use of, as an argument of Justice. It is strange to parallel and compare these two places, *Gen. 6. 5.* with *Gen. 8. 21.* where the reason that *God* giveth of the destruction of the world is this, because that *every imagination of the thoughts of the heart of man, is only evil continually* : and yet, chap. 8. 21. he giveth this as a ground , why he would curse the world no more for mans sake, because,



because, saith he, *the imagination of mans heart is evil from his youth.*

Now we told you at the last occasion we spoke on these words, when we was speaking upon the second thing of Mortification, which was the extent of it, that a Christian should not only mortifie original sin, which is here called *flesh*, but likeways, he should mortifie his predominant idols, which are here called *affections*; and of these two we have spoken: There is this likewise in the extent of Mortification, that a Christian should mortifie the first motions and tentations unto sin, which are here called *lusts*. And for clearing what we shall speak upon this; we conceive, that the first motions of sin do comprehend these two: first, that a Christian should study to mortifie the first tentations he meets with unto acting, or embracing of any particular lust. And secondly, that a Christian should study to avoid all appearance of evil, by which he may be brought to the acting of that sin. We shall not stand long to prove that it is the duty of a Christian to do the first; it is clear not only from *Jam. 4. 7.* where we are commanded *to resist the devil*, which comprehendeth even the resisting of the first motions of sin, as likeways from *1 Pet. 5. 9.* *Whom resist stedfast in the faith*; but likeways it is clear from the practice of *David*, *Psal. 56. 3* where when misbelief began to stir, he put faith in exercise, *What time (saith he) I am afraid, I will trust in thee.* And it is clear from the practice of *Paul*, *2 Cor. 12. 7.* where there was a messenger of Sathan given to buffet him, he went and *beseeked the Lord thrise.* Neither shall we stand to prove, that it is the duty of

of a Christian to flee the appearances of evil.

It is clear, not only from *Deut. 12. 30.* where it is said, thou shalt not *enquire how the Nations serve their gods*: ye may suppose there was no iniquity in this iniquity; yet because it was the appearance of evil, God did forbid it: as likewayes from *Deut. 25. 13, 14.* *Thou shalt not have in thy bagg, diverse weights, a great and a small; thou shalt not have in thine house diverse measures, a great and a small*: it might be supposed, that the having of these things when not used, was not unlawful, but the very having of them, because it was an appearance of evil, it was desired to be eshewed: and that remarkable place, *Prov. 5. 8.* *Come not nigh the door of her house, who is a whore*: and that in *Deut. 12. 3.* where the people are commanded, even to forget the names of Idols. And from *Jude 21.* *to hate the garments spotted with the flesh*: and *Deut. 16. 19.* where it is forbidden for a judge to take a gift, not that there is iniquity in this, but because it is an appearance of evil, lest he should pervert judgment, it is forbidden.

Now that which first we shall speak to upon this, that a Christian should flee the first motions and appearances of sin, shall be this: to propose some considerations unto you, that may inforce this duty more.

The first consideration that we propose is this, that iniquity when it is resisted in its first motions, is most easily conquered and overcome; when sin is killed in its birth, it is killed with the greatest facility and easiness: and certainly, when we delay the mortifying of our lusts, and resists not the devil,

it is no wonder that we are led captive by the hand of our iniquities : It was an ancient saying worthy to be practised, resist the beginning of evil, for the remedy is ever more difficult in the close, then in the beginning. However, we would give Christians these two directions for this consideration. 1. After by the power of grace, ye have overcome the first motions of sin, do not give over your watch, nor sit down in carnal confidence, for he will again assail you, even after you have overcome : It is a remarkable word that is annexed to the close of *Christs* temptations, *Luke 4. 13.* where, after Sathan was foiled most remarkably, it is said, *he departed from him for a season*; he had a mind to return, though he was overcome. 2. We say this, that most ordinarily the resisting of the motions of sin, and overcoming of them, if they be not improven with humility, it is the fore-runner of some sad stroak from the hand of the *Lord*.

There is this second consideration that we would propose for inviting of you to resist the first motions of sin, and it is this, a Christian that maketh conscience of this duty, ordinarily he is blessed with most divine & precious enjoyments of *Jesus Christ* : Let a Christian try this by experience, and when first sin doth assail them, if they will make conscience to resist it, the dew of heaven shall come down and ly upon their branch that their glory may be fresh in them, and they shall be constrained to put up an *Eben-ezer* unto God, & to cry forth, *hitherto hath the Lord helped us*; this is clear from *Rom. 8. 13.* *If ye brough the Spirit shall mortifie the deeds of the flesh, ye shall live*; and clear likewise from *Rev. 2. 17.*



Where, to the man that is in the way of overcoming, *Christ will give him the hidden Manna* : And certainly, we think, if we may make allusion to these words, that curse is accomplished in these dayes, *I will make the heavens brasse, and the earth iron*. There are some upon whom it hath not rained these three years and six moneths, but are become as the bottle in the smoak, the marrow of whose bones is consumed.

There is this third consideration that we would propose, and it is this, that the resisting of the motions and first stirrings of corruption, is the way to get the soul under a most divine impression of the sinfulness of sin : when was it that the Apostle *Paul* cried forth, *O wretched man that I am* ? was it not, when there was a law in his minde, wrestling against the law of his members ? When he was the greatest wrestler, then did sin appear out of measure sinfull unto him. I confesse, that distinction which Papists do so much adore, of *venial and mortal sins*, I think Christians in their practice do make much use of. Are there not many sins, which ye account venial, and writeth this name upon their forehead, this is a *zear*, a little thing, and ye desire to be pardoned, when ye bow your knee in the house of *Rimmon*, if ye go no further : but certainly, the way to bring the soul to a divine loathing of all sin, is to be resisting the first motions of it.

There is this first consideration, that resisting of the first motions of sin, is that which keeps the grace of faith much in exercise, especially in an hour of trial and of temptation. I think, there is nothing that will darken a Christians evidence so much as this

this, the conviction of this, that there was never a sin did assail them, that was resisted in its first motions and stirrings. I confess, I think a bad conscience, is the mother of misbelief, which the *Apostle* doth clearly point at, *1 Tim. 3. 9. Holding* (saith he) *the mystery of faith in a pure conscience*, as if he would have said, that divine and precious guest *Faith*, can lodge in no dwelling but a pure and undefiled conscience: And to make this clear, that the resisting of the motions and first stirrings of sin, have influence to preserve faith in exercise, see *Rev. 2. 17. To him that overcometh*, that is in the way of overcoming, *I will give him a new name*; he shall know that his name is written in these precious records of heaven, and that before the morning stars did sing for joy, e're ever the corner stone of the world was laid, he was engraven upon the heart of precious ones, in indelible letters which cannot be blotted out: As also it is clear from *Rom. 8. 1. compared with 8. and 1. verse*: when was it that *Paul* cried forth, *There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus*? was it not then, when he was wrestling against corruptions

3. And there is this last consideration, which we shall propose to enforce this duty, and it is this, that not resisting sin in its first motions, doth ordinarily be great and bring to passe much hardness and stupidity of heart, when we silence our convictions with sloziness, and answer our reprover with this, *I have cast off my coat*, how shall I put it on? I shall say to each, it is a bad omen and sign that God is upon his way to cease to be such a reprover unto you: I confess, there is a difference betwixt sinning against his

light, and sinning with light; and we conceive that there are many guilty of the one, that are not guilty of the other: However, if once ye shall come this length, as when temptation doth assail you, to make a covenant of peace and agreement with it, ye may expect, if you go to heaven, you shall be safe, but so as by fire: and we confesse there are some whose consciences may bear them record, that they never knew what it was to resist the first motions and stirrings of corruption. It is a lesson of so high nature, that it would need explication unto them: and think ye that ye can attain unto that living and precious hope, who never knew to wrestle with sin, & with your corruptions? is such a delusion as this amongst you, that ye can reign, though ye fight not, and triumph though ye contend not? ye may reign to your own apprehension as kings without *Christ* this way, but shall never reign as kings with him, if ye do not study to mortify your lusts.

That which secondly we shal speak upon this, shal be this, what is the reason that Christians do not resist sin in its first motions and stirrings within them? And we conceive, that it doth either proceed from this, that Christians are not much in the exercise of the grace of watchfulness. I think temptations seises oft-times upon a Christians affections before they be a war, hence it is, that when the Apostle *Peter* is prescribing this direction of resisting the motions of sin, he requireth this as an antecedent duty, that they should be watchful, 1 *Pet.* 5. 8, 9. *Be vigilant, and then, resist him, stedfast in the faith*: when once a Christian hath given over his watch, he is a prey unto his lusts: we may certainly



certainly say of him, that he is a city broken down and without walls, that doth not exercise the grace of watchfulness. Or else it doth proceed from this, that Christians are not in a divine and spiritual frame to resist temptations, when they are first assailed with them. We confesse, our spirits oft-times are so loadened with the pleasure of a world, and are so much taken up with the passing delights of a transient world, that when temptations do come; we do easily condescend to imbrace them: hence it is that the Apostle *James* when he is passing this exhortation upon these to whom he writeth, *resist the Devil*, he subjoyneth this in the 9. vers. as a concomitant duty, *draw near to God*, as if he would have said, If temptations find you at a distance with God, then ye may cry forth, *have pity on me*; for ye are a prey, if ye be not found within sight of him, and if your hearts do not study to walk in the sight of his precious face. As likewayes *Peter* doth prescribe this, 1 *Pet.* 5. 8, 9. *Be sober,* and then, *resist him stedfast in the faith*: and more clearly it is pointed at, *Matth.* 26. 41. *Watch, and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.* And I would only say this unto you, it is a most high and divine walk alwayes to be living within sight of God, that when ye go down to the grave, ye may have this to say, I am now to change my place, but not to change my company; heaven may be to you but a precious passing and transiion unto a more constant and immediat enjoyment of God: Or else it doth proceed from this, that Christians when they are first assailed with the motions and stirrings of corruptions, they do not do violence to their own flesh. I

confess these two Idols , which are dependant one upon another, that idol of *Self*, and that idol of *Ease*, they are the cut-throats of a Christians diligence, and are the great occasion , why we do not overcome , *through the word of our testimony, and by the blood of the Lamb* ; Think ye that it is an easie thing to overcome temptations ? I confess , those that are not acquainted with it may probably say it , but this is certain , that such kind goeth not forth , but by fasting and prayer. It cost *Christ* much toil to liberat you from the guilt of sin , and it will cost you much toil to liberat your selves from the filth of sin. And there is this lastly from which it proceeds, that Christians do not mortifie sin, in its first stirrings and motions, because they are not living under an impression of the sinfulness of sin. We conceive, that oft-times when temptations do assail us, we think, *departing from God* a dispensible evil, and that which easily we may obtain pardon for : I would prescribe that unto you , as one of the greatest mysteries of Christianity , and blessed, blessed is he eternally that hath win to it, and it is this, to be living constantly under a divine impression of the sinfulness of sin, that ye may take it up, in its nature , and in its effects. I think , if one should come from the dead, having the chains of everlasting wrath, wreathed about his feet, and the sheekles of the fury of the *Lord*, wreathed about his hands, and should preach to you , concerning the nature of sin , and how damnable a thing it is, there are many who would not take heed much to such doctrine.

Now that which thirdly we proposed to speak to  
from

from these words was, the difficulty to attain to Mortification, which we conceive, was held forth under that word *Crucify*; which doth import, that Mortification is a longsome work, as crucifying was a longsome death: as likewises it doth import, that Mortification was a painful work, as crucifying was one of the most painful deaths: And likewises it holds forth the intensive nature of Mortification, that a Christian should study not to be content until he did kill corruption: And concerning these three we shall speak together: And we shall point out the difficulty of attaining to Mortification in these things. Is there not this which points out the difficulty of it, that there is a woful unity of affection betwixt us and our lusts, they are dear to us as the right eye, and our right hand, and right foot: And I confesse, to convince you of that unity that is betwixt you and your lusts, I think that expression which ordinarily ye use, when one is reproving you for your passion, or for your swearing, may suffice; ye will answer, what aileth you at me? which doth speak this, that you say, your lusts and you are one. And I confess *Paul* hath an expression like this, *Rom. 7. 8. I know* (saith he) *that in me dwelleth no good thing.* There are two *me's* in a Christian; there is a spiritual and a refined *Me*, there is a carnal and a wicked *Me*, as *Paul* doth distinguish them in that verse, *I know* (saith he) *that in me dwelleth no good thing*: and yet he subjoyneth, *In me to will that is present*, which is one good thing. And we confess that word is accomplished in *Me*, *They are joyned to their idols, let them alone.*



There is that secondly which pointeth out the difficulty of Mortification, and it is the strength of those lusts that are within us, we think the Scripture is so abundant in pointing out the strength of sin, that we need not speak much to it : there is that expression, *Rom. 8. 2.* which is a most strange word, it is there called *the law of sin and of death* : as it were, sin pleads for as much subjection from us, as if we were tyed by law to obey it : And in that verse, there is a sweet contrariety of laws, *the law of the spirit of life, hath made me free from the law of sin and of death.* If so we may speak, there is, in a manner, one decree and statute of heaven declaring another to be null ; for it was a law in heaven, that we should be under death, because we were under sin ; but behold, here is a posterior law that doth sweetly reduce this prior law, and it is, *the law of the Spirit of life.* As likewayes, that expression pointeth forth the strength of corruption, which is *2 Cor. 10. 4.* where he saith, we are to fight for *the pulling down of strong holds*, as it were, sin fortifieth it self within our bosome : and we confess, if this were believed, we should study to mortify our corruptions with a great deal of more pains and constancy. There is this likewayes, which pointeth it out, and it is, the deceitfulness of our lusts, and the subtilty which they vent in their deceiving of us ; which is clear from that expression, *Jam. 1. 14.* *When a man, (saith he) is drawn away, and entised of his lusts* : the word there that is rendered *entised*, is taken from the fishers, who deceive the silly fishes, with an apparent bait of pleasure. We confess, these two are the great obstructi-

obstructions of a Christians progress to heaven, there are temptations of fear, and there are temptations from advantage: which two, if they were removed, we might with greater facility overcome our lusts, and sing a song of triumph over our Idols: oft-times that expression is recorded *deceitfulness of sin*: we confess, if this were believed, we would use a more divine and holy prudence, least we should be ensnared. And to shut up our discourse upon Mortification, upon which we have been speaking so long; we shall only speak a little to obviate any mistake that may be about the difficulty of any Mortification, which shall include that which we intended to speak upon; which was the certainty of overcoming.

And that which first we would say unto you is this; Be perswaded of this, that there is more divine satisfaction in the resisting of your lusts, and wrestling against them, then there is in the actual fruition of them all: that word of *Solomons*, *Stollen waters are sweet*, saith the adulterous woman, but at last they shall be convinced of the contrary: and that word which he speaketh, *Bread of deceit is pleasant to the mouth, but he knoweth not, that the dead are there*, &c. And we think the *Apostle* sweetly chydeth the Romans concerning this thing, *What fruit have you of those things, whereof you are now ashamed?* It is sad to think upon that woful disappointment that many shall meet with.

There is this which we would likeways say, that there is a divine certainty of a Christians overcoming, let the difficulties be never so many, and (O beloved in the Lord) are not these glad tidings

from a far country, and may be as cold water to a thrifty mans soul, that a Christian shall once overcome: And I confess there are these four things, that speak the certainty of a Christians overcoming: 1. The faithfulness, and the love of *Jesus Christ* is laid in pawn for our overcoming, which is clear from that *Joh. 6. 39.* *And this is the fathers will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should losse nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day:* And we confess, this is certain, it is more of *Christs* concernment that a believer should overcome, then it is of his own. O! what songs to the faithfulness of *Christ*, what songs to his love shall be sung that day, when the precious troupe of his Saints, shall return from the day of judgement, and that general infare shall be of all those that have been begotten unto a lively hope, when they shall convey *Christ* home, through the ports of the new *Jerusalem*, every one having a harp of God in his hand, and shall cry forth, *Halelujah, Halelujah* to him that sitteth upon the Throne, and to the lamb for ever and ever: that song shall have no period, though it have a beginning.

There is this likewayes which pointeth forth their certainty of overcoming, *Christ* hath overcome, and therefore a Christian shall overcome. It was the sweet divinity of the Apostle *Paul*, *Heb. 2. 9, 10.* there is a promise (saith he) that all things shall be put under our feet, but we see not that promise accomplished, saith he: I see one thing accomplished, which is a pledge of it, I see *Jesus Christ*, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and with Majesty: *Christ* is in heaven, and he

must



must be there: and that word. *John 16.* last, *Be of good cheer*, saith he, *for I have overcome the world*; which is a pledge and certain token, that ye shall once overcome.

There is this likewayes which points forth their certainty of overcoming, that that same power which was exercised in bringing *Christ* from death, and in making him to overcome principalities and powers, is communicate to believers to make them overcome; as it is clear from *Eph. 1.19,20.* where it is said, *That power that wrought mightily in Christ to raise him from the dead, doth also work in those that believe.* O! Christians, heirs of the grace of life, believe this, that Omnipotency is ingaged on your behalf; and have you not learned that first point of the Creed, that *there is nothing impossible to God*: and so when you are constrained sometimes to cry out, *Who shall stand before the children of Anak*: Content your selves with this, that there is nothing too hard for him.

And there is this lastly, which points it out, that divine and invisible knot of union that is betwixt *Christ* and his members: Is *Christ* above? the members must follow: for ye know, though *Christ* be the fulness of the Saints, yet the Saints are the fulness of *Christ*: there is a sweet mutual fulfilling and accomplishing each one of another: know ye not that word, *that where I am, there they may be also*: I think of all the words that *Christ* ever spoke to the Father, that word was the most imperious and commanding like word which he hath, *Joh. 17. 24. I will* (saith he) *that those that thou hast given me, be where I am.* It was not his prayer which

which came that length, he willed it, and would not be contradicted: And certainly there is nothing that may comfort you in the hour of trial so much as this, *Christ* is upon his way to relieve you, and ye are upon your way of overcoming: And I shall only say that word, which ought to be your practice, 1 *Joh.* 5. 18. *Whosoever is born of God sinneth not, and that wicked one toucheth him not*: That ordinary expression which you have, you should not rub cloths with him, nor touch him. And to those that are walking in the broad paths of sin, I shall only speak that to you which is, *Joh* 21. 22. *His eyes shall see his destruction, and he shall drink of the wrath of the Almighty*. Your eyes and your taste shall be satisfied; and that word which is *vers.* 30. *he shall be preserved to the day of destruction, or as the word in the original, he shall be reserved to the day of wrath*: as it were, there shall be a combination of wrath, and justice that shall seize upon you, Now to him who is upon his way, who shall come and will not tarry, and whose reward is with him, we desire to give praise.

### S E R M O N V I I I.

*Gal.* 6. 14. *By whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.*

**C**Hristianity doth consist in a blessed exchange of affections, a soul dying in its affections and respects to all things, that are here below; and living and advancing in its desires toward him, who is that blessed and universal good. It ought to be that arch-plot, and great design, that Christians ought

ought to promote, to attain to that original unity, which once was in mans affections towards God. O! what blessedness did *Adam* enjoy, while he did stand in that estate wherein he was created, he having a blessed harmony of all his affections toward God, and likewyses there being a most divine correspondence and blessed familiarity betwixt heaven and earth, betwixt him who sitteth on the Throne and the foot-stool: but that was most eminently verified, that *man being in honour, did not abide*. O! what anxious and perplexing thoughts had poor *Adam*, no doubt, some hours after his fall, when he did reflect upon that which was once his condition, and did compare it with that which was now his lot, might not he take up that lamentation over himself, *Man in his best estate is altogether vanity*; And likewyses he might have that proverb taken up of himself, *How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning?* Now, man by losing that blessed unity that was in his affections, hath contracted a woful and infinit diversity in his affections towards these things that are here below: so that those affections which did once sweetly run in one channel toward God, are now divided and separated in many channels, toward those things that are below him: And there is nothing beneath the Son, that leadeth captive so many of our desires as the *World*: therefore it were your advantage to be crucified to the world, and to have the world crucified to you: that you may discover, that endless vanity, and unspeakable vexation of spirit, that is in all things that are here: The world is a perfect compend and compleat epitome of all misery:



misery: *God* himself is that compend of all blessed-  
 nesse, so that there is nothing that we can take up  
 under this, but it is most eminently in him. It is a  
 duty which is much undervalued in these dayes,  
 Christians to be promoving in that blessed work, of  
 having themselves crucified to the world, and having  
 the world crucified to them : O ! how suitable is  
 it for those who are heirs and expectants of that  
 blessed hope and everlasting enjoyment of being  
 with *God*, who is the Judge of all flesh, and with  
*Jesus Christ*, who is the Mediator of the New Cove-  
 nant, and with the innumerable company of holy  
 Angels, and to be made heirs and co-heirs with  
*Jesus Christ*. Is it not below you to be much taken  
 up in your vain and anxious pursuits after those  
 things that are here below : The objects of the de-  
 sires of your immortal spirits ought to be more high  
 than things below, and ought to be more divine  
 than things humane ; your affections ought to be  
*ascending as pillars of smoke*, and ye should be  
 breathing after that blessed day when there shall  
 be a confinement of all your affections on him. We  
 have at some occasions spoken unto you, of the  
 grace of humility, and of the grace of love, the  
 one teaching us to undervalue our self, the other  
 teaching us to value *God* : And had you been much  
 taken up in the spiritual and living exercise of  
 those, there should not have been much difficulty  
 to perswade you at this time. We shall not insist  
 long in telling what Mortification is ; It is a con-  
 stant and blessed endeavour of the Christian, to re-  
 move out of his way all those impediments, that do  
 interrupt the exercise of love ; As likeways, it is  
 that

that which entertaineth a constant and perpetual antipathy and holy indignation against every thing, thorow which his conformity with *God*, and that perfect likeness & similitude with his Maker, might be in any way impaired. Mortification doth not consist in those unconstant and unequal exercises of mortifying our lusts, it consists not in those violent flashes of holy zeal and indignation against our iniquities; for though that indignation be violent for its time, yet it doth quickly vanish and pass away: but that grace of Mortification must be a constant and dayly exercise; We will solace our selves in the chambers of our imagery, by beholding our idols pourtrayed upon the wall we will study to receive satisfaction in our apprehensions, when we cannot receive satisfaction in the actual fruition of them: Such is likewises the woful desperateness of the hearts of the children of men, that when *God* hath put a worm to the root of that gourd, under the shadow of which, we used to solace our selves, we cry forth from a discontented humor, *It is better for us to die then to live*: O! there are many here, to whom it would be death to out-live their idols; their idols and they are pleasant in their lives, and they desire not to be divided in their deaths. 3. Mortification doth not consist in that partial and divided way of mortifying our corruptions, we taking vengeance upon some of our lusts, but with *Saul*, sparing it who is the King. *Naaman the Syrian* must have an indulgence of bowing his knee in the house of *Rimmon*: *Lot* must plead for the sparing of *Zoar*, that small thing: and so when we are intending that work of Mortification, we plead for the sparing

spearing of these things, which we call *Zears*, these small, but our Master-corruptions. Certainly that evangelick Mortification which is required of us, doth not consist in this, for we must intend an universal separation betwixt us and all our idols, we must cast away all our idols to the moles and to the batts, and *we must defile the covering of them, and he alone must be the cover of our eyes*: He never knew what the grace of Mortification meant, who never set about the accomplishment of the ruine of that great & master-idol which domineereth over him: And we conceive, that the best and most solid way of knowing our growth in Mortification, is by reflecting upon the decay of these idols, which are our predominants; other sins which assail us may decay, and their strength wax weak, and yet mortification not be on the growing hand, for there are many of our lusts, that rather die by concession, then by constraint; there are many of our idols that rather go out of us, then are cast out.

Now the first thing that a Christian ought to endeavour to mortifie is, his love to the world, which was the practice of this holy man: In the words he pointeth out unto us that way, wherein he did attain this compleat and spiritual Mortification to the world, holden forth to us in these words, *by whom*, which doth relate unto *Jesus Christ*, who is made mention of in the words going before: or, as the words may be rendered, *by which I am crucified to the world*, and so they relate unto the cross of *Jesus Christ*. Now under this notion of *being crucified*, he doth certainly hold forth unto us, that great difficulty that is in accomplishing the work



work of Mortification ; And under this name of *being crucified*, he holdeth forth unto us, the long-somness of the time that we must spend , before we can attain compleat Mortification , *Crucifying* being one of the most lent and slow of all violent deaths ; Mortification is not a work of one day, it will cost us many dayes and years , before we shall crush the head of him, who hath so oft-times crushed our heel , before that blessed promise shall be fulfilled , that *all things shall be put in subjection unto us* : Sin doth most easily invade us , and take possession of us , but it is not easily dispossessed ; for except we had the infinit strength of him who is *Jehovah*, we might sit down , and close our hands, and never meane to oppose these Idols, under whose subjection we are : This word of *being crucified*, doth likwayes hold forth the painfulness and un-  
 cessant of this work of Mortification, *Crucifying* being a death, amongst all violent deaths, one of the most bitter : we must certainly be mortified to our ease, before we can be mortified to our lusts , we must travel in birth , before the grace of Mortification can be formed in us. It is a wofull evil in these dayes, that the most part of people walk under this apprehension, that there is not much difficulty to Mortifie their corruptions , but it is a token, that they never knew what it was to mortifie them , who never knew the difficulty of Mortification.

The third thing that is holden forth under this name of *being crucified* is, that wofull reluctancy and indisposition of spirit, which we have to this blessed exercise of Mortifying our corruptions ; we have

as

as great unwillingness unto it, as though we were not to go to subject our selves to some violent death. O! how is vanity and corruption joyned to the spirits of the sons of men: how loth are we to have that wofull and accursed union betwixt us and our lusts dissolved? O! how many Orators and Procurators within our selves have we to plead for this, *the sparing of our lusts*: we may be perswaded of this, that if we be not the ruine of our iniquity, iniquity shall certainly be our ruine. O! how may we blush and be confounded seven dayes, that we should be so loth to have a separation betwixt us and these things, by which our distance with God and estrangement from him, is so much increased: this vanity is unspeakable, that we should be so averse from that wherein our eternal blessedness doth ly, in having that wofull band, which we have wreathed about our own necks, taken off by the blessed and everlast- ing hands of him who hath died and risen again, to accomplish this blessed design.

Lastly, under this word of *being crucified*, is held forth unto us that compleat and spiritual Mortification to the world, that this holy man attained to. As he was as one dead to these things: he was not much exercised in joy in having the world, neither was he exercised in grief, by wanting the things of the world, he was a man dead, which could not be moved by any of these things: We do not say so, that *Paul* was altogether a Stoick, without all passions of grief and sorrow, or of joy, but we only say this, that he did not grieve for the want of the world, as those who have no hope; neither did he so joy in having the world, as those who have

er not a more divine and high spring of consolation,  
th he was clothed with a holy indifferency, and a  
he blessed neutrality in having or wanting these things;  
ve it was none of *Pauls* desires to have the world, he  
our had learned that divine and excellent art of being  
ra content with every estate of life; he knew not  
he what it was to murmur; And it were certainly  
is much our advantage, to be provoked to jealousy,  
ry when we reflect upon the practice of this holy man.  
st I conceive, that if all that are here would examine  
be themselves, by how many degrees their Mortifica-  
se to the world, doth come short of this, they  
e might sit down and conclude with themselves, that  
ty they are yet to begin to mortifie; yea, there are  
m many here, to whom we may say, that they are so  
v far from being clothed with a holy indifferency in  
ut having the things of the world, that they are clothed  
st with that woful and indispenfible necessity in pur-  
to suing after these things: this is the language  
of the most part, *Give give*, men hurrying themselves  
ld in multitudes of hopes, and of tears, and o expecta-  
ra tions, and likeways an infinit number of desires;  
o And what is the end and result of all these things,  
or but *vanity and vexation of spirit*.

er Now that you may be helped to attain this con-  
cerning-duty, to be mortified to the world, we shal  
be propose these things unto you: The first is this, be  
o much taken up in a holy contemplation and spiri-  
stual beholding of these unsearchable excellencies  
ly that are in *God*. If once the soul of the creature  
he were elevated to behold him, there should not be  
id much difficulty, to be mortified to the world: were  
ve we once admitted to draw by a lap of the vail, and  
behold



behold that uncreated glory and unexpressible Majesty that is treasured up in him, Mortification should be no great difficulty unto us: this is clearly held forth here, for *Paul* doth tell by whom he had this grace of Mortification, it was by beholding *that* *pleasant plant of renown Jesus Christ*. This is clear likewise, *1 Joh. 5. 5. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus Christ is the Son of God?* Did we once believe that fundamental Article of faith, that he who was crucified upon the tree, was the real *Son of God*, we should most easily win to this concerning duty of Mortification. We may reduce all the causes of our little growth in this blessed work, to that woful ignorance of *God*, do wherewith the most part of us are clothed: were there a door opened to us in heaven, and were we in the spirit to behold him who sits upon the *Throne*, whose countenance is like a *Sardine stone*, and about whose *Throne* there is that *rain-bow*; could we penetrate thorow these vails, wherewith both he and we are covered, we being cloathed with the vail of our ignorance, and likewise with the vail of our impurity; and he being cloathed with these two most glorious vails, the vail of his unsearchableness, and the vail of that wonderful and unexpressible Majesty that is in him, the one confounding the judgement, and the other confounding the affections, - so that affection and judgement in a manner is put to a none exercise, and both of these do sweetly resolve in that blessed one act of admiration. We need not speak much to the commendation of those unto you, who were never acquainted with him, that so ye might be perswaded

do forsake your old lovers; We shall only say this, silence and admiration they speak least, and yet speak most: there is more divine Oratory in holy silence, & more excellent expressions in blessed admiration, than all our inventions could reach: what can man speak of him who is that unsearchable and incomprehensible Majesty? This may appear a paradox to you, that silence should speak; and admiration commend: but it is no paradox, when the object of our commendation, is by infinit degree exalted above our blessing and our practice. O! men of the world, will you once be perswaded to make that blessed divorce betwixt you and your Idols, that there may be an everlasting conjunction betwixt God and you: O! if ye had so much divine understanding, as to judge of things according to their real worth, *He alone should be exalted in that way*: Come and see and behold what infinit sweetness is treasured up in him, those springs wherewith ye delight your selves shall ere long dry up; but he is that high and infinit spring, which alwayes floweth out, and yet is not impaired.

The second thing whereby we may attain to this blessed duty of Mortification to the world, is this, by reflecting how passing and transient those things are, wherewith the sons of men use to solace themselves. *Paul* doth press Mortification to the world from this consideration, *1 Cor. 7. 31. The fashion of this world passeth away*: the word is most emphatick, of his *Schema* and representation of the world, or this stage-play of the world, it passeth away; therefore, *let those that rejoyce be as though they rejoyced not, and let them be careful for nothing*: this is clear, *1 John 2. 17.*  
and

and 1 Pet. 4. 7. did we solidly believe how changeable those enjoyments of the world were, would we hurry our selves so much in our pursuits after them? Those who are lifted up in their enjoyments this day, may be thrust down low the next day: Job, who was a man enriched in many things, yet a few dayes, yea, we may say, a few hours made a sad and strange exchange: We may affirm that, with great assurance of truth, *Surely man at his best estate is altogether vanity*: that word that is there ( *at his best estate* ) may be rendered thus, *although he stand: Etiam si constitutus*, in your most fixed and settled condition in the world: this is the Emblem and Motto of your state *vanity*, most subject to change: and why should you weary your selves in the fire for that which is very vanity?

The third thing by which ye may attain this duty of Mortification, is to be much taken up in the consideration of the brevity of your life: I suppose, that if we were walking more in the house of mourning, and were believing that truth, *that it is appointed for man once to die*, and that shortly, we must be brought home unto that unchangeable estate of life; O! how would this allay us in our pursuits? I think this were a little water, which we might mix with our wine, when there is greatest confidence of Creature-contentments: lest the foam of this wine should distemper our head, we may mix it with this water, *the brevity of our life*. It is a sweet subject for meditation when we are most high, to be much in the consideration of this, that within a few dayes we shall be most low. What is your life but a vapour, which doth quickly  
evanish,



vanish; and doth but appear for a little? Suppose the whole Creation should stay with you during all your time, yet how short should your enjoyment be? what is mans life, but a hand-breadth, these four finger breadths, which is one of the least of all geometrical measures; there is morning, forenoon, afternoon, and night all which do amount to a day? there is infancy, youth, manhood, & old age, and those do quickly vanish and passe away. How many are hurried into eternity, in the first step of their dayes, in their infancy? And again, how many in their youth? and we have frequent experience, that many in their manhood, and in the flour of their age, that sentence cometh forth, *Return ye children of men*: and there is not one amongst an hundred, that do attain to that utmost period that nature doth allow; and what though ye did live fourscore of years, which is the utmost period that nature hath allowed, yet doth your time quickly vanish and flee away? Why should you solace your selves with those things that cannot eternally remain with you? when ye go down to the grave, you can take nothing of these things with you: for in all points as you came, so shall ye go and what profite is there that ye have laboured for the wind?

The fourth thing whereby we may be helped to attain this, is this, Be much in the mortifying of those corruptions which cannot be entertained, but by intaining also this woful corruption of covetousness: there are some corruptions, which have a near affinity to, as likewaves dependance upon, this sin, that if these be not crushed, we cannot attain to this duty of Mortification, there is *prodigality*

and

and pride, these two grand enemies, to the accomplishment of this blessed design: and we would begin to crush these, before we can begin to accomplish this.

There is another way which is this, be much taken up in the reflecting upon that blessed hope and that grace which shall be brought unto you at the revelation of *Jesus Christ*. Peter presseth sobriety to all things here below, by this argument, *1 Pet. 1. 13. Be sober, and he giveth this reason of it, for the grace that shall be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ: O! were we much taken up in beholding that blessed estate of life, which the souls of just men made perfect shall have with God, where we shall enjoy, and yet not loath: there shall be an everlasting conjunction betwixt desire and enjoyment of him who is the person beloved, so that it thinks never to receive satisfaction; all it doth receive, is more to provoke its appetite, then to satisfy its desire.*

There is a last, which is this, be much in the consideration of that day, when all the families of the earth shall appear before him *in the valley of decision*. This indeed would help us, to much mortification to these things of the world, as is clear from *Eccles. 11. 9.* had we the faith of that day engraven upon our spirits, that we must render an account of our wayes, O! how wary should we be in ingaging with vanity? I think the great cause why it hath so universal a dominion over the sons of men is, because we do not solidly believe that there is such a day approaching, when we shall appear before the judgement seat of him, who shall judge not after

the seeing of the eye, nor shall reprove after the hearing of the ear, but shall judge righteous judgement: The terror of the Lord would certainly pervade us, if we did believe this. O! what a holy unwillingness should we have in walking after the paths of our idols.

Now we shall shut up our discourse with this, be persuaded once to begin that work of mortification, and especially in mortifying your love to the world: he that returneth victor after war with his idols, we may call him *Joseph*, for he shall be as a fruitful *olive tree* whose branches run over the wall. If once you spoil that grand and arch-rebel, who doth so much oppose you, in a manner, you should stand alone and sing a triumph, they should flee when none pursueth; and we ought be strong as a lion, and who should rouse us up?



Of Spiritual  
C O N T E N T M E N T.

S E R M O N I X.

Phil. 4. 11. *I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.*

It was *Adams* ignorance of this divine mystery of Christianity, to be content with every estate, wherein he was placed, that did bring him down from that high pinnacle of his excellency, and did degrade him from that primitive glory, wherewith he was clothed, for he not being content with that precious and excellent lot, wherein God had placed him,

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but



but coveting after a more noble and excellent Being, he came exceedingly short of this design. And such is the Athenian and woful frame of spirit wherewith men are possessed, that they can fancy no blessedness in what they are, but imagine a greater blessedness to be in what they are not; hence it is that men do covet the lot of others, and are dissatisfied with their own estate, and condition: and certainly the affections of men while they are living under these spheres which are in perpetual motion can never be satisfied, nor be at rest: which was the observation of that master of experiences, Prov. 27. 20 *Hell and destruction are never full, so the eyes of man are never satisfied*; and as he saith, Eccles. 8. *The eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing*: And we may likewise adde, that the heart is not satisfied with the enjoying; And it is certainly thorow the deceitfulness of the spirit of man, and that invisible root of pride, that every lot and condition of life is subject to satiety and loathing: private men do envy the greatness of Princes, and Princes do envy the quiet repose of private men, though they will not descend nor reduce themselves unto that estate, but do alwayes feele that, which sometimes they are constrained to desire: And believe me, a Christian sitting down seriously, to contemplat and view what an infinite multitude of hopes, fears and desires the spirit of man is possessed with; as likewise to behold how that *vanity and vexation of spirit*, is engraven upon the choicest lot that a Christian can meet with here, he may be provoked to look out at the windows of his prison-house, and long for that precious day

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when Christ should be as a roe, or as a young hind  
 coming over the mountains of Bethel, waiting to be  
 exalted to that precious and excellent estate of  
 life, where there shall be neither loathing nor long-  
 ing: Abel who hath been the first possessor of hea-  
 ven of all the house and family of Adam, and hath  
 dwelt in it near six thousand years, yet there is not  
 in him the least inclination or motion to change or  
 alter his estate; there is no loathing in heaven nor  
 desire to flit there; And, believe me, this divine  
 mystery of contentment with every lot and conditi-  
 on, in which a Christian is placed, is not easily  
 attained. O! what repinings hath the unmortified  
 spirit of man to the dispensations of God, in regul-  
 ating his lot and estate, which doth alone speak  
 worth the *Atheism* of our heart: for it is, as it were,  
 man proposing a model, and form unto God, how  
 he should rule and govern the world. I think  
 Christians are as much subject to the fashion of  
 this contempt and pride as any. It was a noble  
 saying of one, in the commendation of victory over  
 mans self, *Tunc omnia regna tenebis, cum poteris*  
*exisse tui*, ye shall then be made a possessor of all  
 kingdoms, when ye shall be made a ruler and king  
 of your self. And no doubt, one that is once mortifi-  
 ed to this passion of discontent, he may dwell  
 upon the Mountains of *Ararat* in the midst of all  
 the revolutions, and changes that are here below;  
 such a Christian may sweetly contemplat the over-  
 turning of Estates and Common-wealths, and may  
 patiently endure every lot that doth befall him, and  
 possess his soul in patience: And certainly, if men  
 knew but this one thing, that the whole circumfer-

ence of the earth, is but one point of the Universe and that all time that hath been, is, or shall be, is but one instant, in comparison of eternity: and what is man but a part of that point? and what is his life but a small part of that instant? And why then should man anxiously complain, to spend a part of a moment in enduring the most anxious and sad things that can befall him? And, (as *Christ* doth most divinely speak) *Can a man by taking thought, adde one cubit to his stature?* what poor advantage hath a man by his discontentment and sorrow, if it be not to render himself more miserable? we may say of heavenly-mindedness and of contentment, they are like *Hippocrates* Twins, that live and die together, they are two sweet companions, that alwayes go along together, and cannot be divided.

But to descend a little more to the words, you have *Paul* in them obviating any misconstruction that the *Philippans* might have of his joy, which he expresseth in the former verse, as if he had been one that was coveting great things for himself, or desiring to be great in the world, no, saith he, *speake not these things because of want*, which formerly I had, and is now made up, for saith he, *I have learned in every estate that I am, therewith to be content*. There is no lot, saith *Paul*, but I can patiently endure it, and can with a divine complacency, carry my self under it; And this he proveth in the 12 verse, *I know*, saith he, *how to be debased*, I am instructed in this divine art, how to walk soberly under debasement, and *I know*, saith he, *how to abound*. I am not one that is puffed up with a prosperous



in the world: And least this assertion of *Pauls* should seem to be a boasting beyond his line, and of being exalted above measure, he doth sweetly subjoyn that humble assertion, *I can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth me*; As if he would have said, do not mistake me, or conceive me under a more divine and high notion then ye ought, for I am but a poor and sinful man, who can do nothing of my self, but as I am over-acted by a divine and supream hand. I am enabled to triumph over the most adverse and sinistrous lot, that can befall me.

The words which we have read, in the original they are most significant and emphatick; that word which is here rendered *Content*, is *All-sufficient*, and so the words may sweetly run thus, *I have learned in every estate wherein I am, to be all-sufficient*, of which that word, *Prov. 14. 14. Is a sweet commentary, The back-slider in heart shall be filled with the fruit of his own way, but a godly man shall be satisfied from himself.* In a manner, there is a well-spring of everlasting consolation within the Christian, which maketh him endure every anxious lot. And no doubt, that word *I have learned*, doth both speak the difficulty of attaining this mystery of divine contentment, as likeways it speaketh out that ignorance of this divine and noble end wherewith *Paul* was once possessed: I was once, saith he, as rude as any in the knowledge of this thing, but now through the understanding and wisdom of *God*, I am made perfect in the knowledge of these things. And that word *in every estate*, doth exceedingly commend that great pitch of Christianity, unto which *Paul* had attained, there was no lot

that could befall him wrong ; And we shall only say this by the way, continuance of affliction is one of the greatest occasions of impatience that is any imaginable. A Christian, when first he meets with a cross, may be provoked to salute it, and embrace it ; but if it be lengthened out upon him, then he cryeth forth, *hast thou found me, O thou mine enemy* ; and then beginneth to call in question the loving kindness of the Lord, and to complain, *that he hath not shut up his mercies in everlasting forgetfulness* ; though what we may say, in the day that a Christian shall be passing thorow the valley of the shadow of death, he shall be sweetly convinced of his impatience, when a Christian shall be constrained, to engrave that Motto upon the door of his everlasting rest, *he hath done what he will*. What thoughts will ye have of these risings and debates of spirit wherewith ye have been possessed ? We may imagine and not without some ground, that a great part of eternity shall be spent in interrogations, *Christ shall inter-rogate us*, if we lacked any thing while we were here below, and we shall be constrained to answer, *nothing*, even in that day when he sent us forth with our scrip, or money, or without sandals or anything, and those that did belong to us, we shall be constrained, to subscribe to the infinite wisdom of God in regulating of our lot.

Now in speaking upon this divine quality & duty of divine contentment, ( which we conceive, is the duty most requisit in these dayes ) we shall not insist long in pointing out what this divine grace or contentment is, but we conceive, it includeth not only this, a sweet and composed frame of spirit, but

under

Under every anxious lot and dispensation with which we meet, of which that word is a commentary, *Lev. 10. 3.* where it is said of *Aaron*, when his afflictions were cut off, *He held his peace*, and that word, *Psal. 62. 1.* *Truly my soul waiteth upon the Lord*: But the words in the original are this, *Truly my soul be thou silent unto God*, as they are rendered in the margin of the book, as if he would have said, *do not fret nor be disquieted*, because of any thing that he carveth out unto thee.

But likewise this grace and duty of contentment includeth, a holy complacency, and sweet serenity and calmness of spirit under every lot, of which that word is a commentary, *Jam. 1. 2.* *Count it all joy when you fall into diverse temptations*, and that word, *Rom. 5. 3.* *We glory in tribulation*. Neither shall we yield long upon this, to prove that it is the duty of a Christian to be content with every estate wherein God shall put him: This is clear, *1 Tim. 6. 8.* *Having food and raiment let us therewith be content*: and *Heb. 13. 5.* *Be content with these things that now you have*; and *Jam. 4. 7.* and *Luk. 3. 14.* And we may say, if a Christian made the world but his servant, little would content him, but if once he make the world his master, and lord of his affections, then his desires will be infinit, and cannot at all be satisfied. We shall not long stand to inveigh against that too much addictedness of man to those passing and transient vanities of the world: we conceive there are these three things, which men do most earnestly cover, there is pleasure, riches, and honour; And certainly, these are below an immortal spirit, to fix their desires upon them: would ye



have *Solomons* verdict of riches, O ye that trust in uncertain riches, ye have it sweetly in, *Prov.* 23. 5. Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? In a manner, riches they have not a being, for they take wings to themselves and they flee away, as *Solomon* doth most sweetly speak, *Eccles.* 5. 11. If riches increase, what profit (saith he) is there to the owner thereof, save to be beholder of them with their eyes: all that the owner of riches hath, is, the seeing of them, which a man, who is a passer by may likewise have, though he be not a possessor of them. And hence is that word, *Luk.* 14. where the man desiring to be excused for not coming to Christ, saith to himself, *I have bought a piece of ground and must needs go see it*; all his enjoyment of it was comprehended in that one poor thing, to behold it; And as for honour and glory, which, spirits that are more refined, and are not so wedded to the things of a world, pursue after, I would only have them knowing that one word, *Psal.* 62. 9. *Men of high degree are a lie, and men of low degree are vanity*: as if he would have said, any prehemineny that one hath, that hath an excellent lot in the world above a poor one, doth consist in this, the one is a vanity, and the other is a lying vanity, speaking somewhat to be in him, which is not really in him; and that word, *Acts.* 25. 23, where, speaking of *Bernice*, that came in with great pomp and glory unto the Senat-house, the word that is there rendered *pomp and glory* is this, he came in with a great fantasie *Μετα πολ- λης φαντασίας*, with a great show and image, without any thing in reality: And as for pleasures of the world, with which these epicurean spirits of the world

in world are so much besotted, know that verdict of Solomon, which he hath of these things *Vanity of vanities, and all things are vanity and vexation of spirit.* And what can the man do that cometh after the king? If Solomon found no more, no doubt, none that cometh after him, can find any more.

But that which we shall speak to first upon this, shall be, what are the causes and principles from whence the discontentment of one doth flow, under any anxious or sad lot that doth befall him? And we conceive that it either doth proceed from this, to a Christian not being much in the exercise of self-examination, as it is clear from that word, *Psal. 4. 4. Examine your selves upon your bed and be still,* speaking so much, that the compendious way unto submission and contentment under any lot, is to be much in self-examination: And certainly self-examination hath much influence upon contentment under every lot, because such a one doth most accurately take up these imperfections and blemishes that are in him, so instead of complaining, he is constrained to wonder and cry forth, *Why should a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sin: likewayes one that is much in self-examination, is a man that can take up the intendment of the rod, as likewayes the advantage of it, and so he is constrained patiently to bear the rod in his youth, and to sit down and adore the unsearchable wisdom of God in dispensing such things to him. That word, Prov. 19. 3. Is oft-times verified of us, the heart of man perverteth his way, and then he fretteth against the Lord, when he is chastened for it. O; but if a Christian were dwelling much at home, he*

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might

might wonder that yet he hath a beeing in the world, and is not cut off from the right hand of the Lord, O! bless him eternally that ye are not sent away to be reserved in everlasting chains.

There is this likewayes that doth occasion discontentment under our lot, and it is, want of that divine preparation to meet with every lot that can befall us before it come. We think a Christian ought to be general in his resolutions, to bear every cross that *Christ* will carve out. And certainly, there are these two advantages that a Christian hath of general and universal resolutions. First, he hath this advantage, that when he is chastened, as it were, in his goods or any other thing that belongeth to him, he beginneth to sing a song of praise, because it is not worse with him: there can no lot befall a man who is universal in his resolutions, but he will have a song of praise unto God, because of it. Secondly, he hath this advantage, that foresight and resolution to meet with any cross doth exceedingly dispose the Christian for meeting with it: we conceive that word which is *Job* 3, 25. hath had great influence on *Jobs* patience, *for the thing which I greatly feared, is come upon me*: afflictions do oft-times surprize us, and so we faint in the day of adversity, and so prove our strength to be but small.

There is this likewayes which occasioneth our discontentment, and it is this, that little heavenly mindedness, that is in a Christian, when he meeteth with his rod: O! but a Christian sitting down upon mount *Pisgah*, to behold that promised land, might with patience bear his rod: this is clear, 2 *Cor.* 4.



16. compared with vers. 17. where Paul giveth this reason of his courage and constancy under his rod, that he had an eye unto those things that were eternal: did ye never know what such a thing meant, as to drown the thoughts of your present misery, in these precious depths of eternity, to be beholding so much in heaven, as might infinitely solace, yea, and make up all your losses here. I confess that opinion of the Stoicks, that did commend apathie and want of passions unto men, that they should not be much moved with grief for the want of any thing, nor be moved with joy for the having or possessing of any thing, is in some sense good: hence was it that in some sense they spoke divinely, *nihil boni vel mali accidit homini, nisi bonus vel malus animus*; that there was no evil nor good that did befall man, but only a good and evil mind: If the heart was in a divine and spiritual frame, they knew not what any other sad or anxious lot could do to them.

There is this likewayes which occasioneth discontentment, and it is this, the want of the taking up God as the cause and author of those sad evils which befall us; which if it were once believed, we should be ashamed to dispute and murmur so much as we do: this is clear, 1 Sam. 3. near the close, that word of Elies, *It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good*: and that word, Psal. 39. 9. *I was dumb, I opened not my mouth*, and this reason is given of it, *because thou didst it*: and that word, Isa. 39. 8. *Good is the word of the Lord*. And certainly the murmurings and repinings of our hearts, do speak that grosse Atheism that dwelleth within us:

O! durst we debate with him who is *Almighty*, or put him to render an accompt of his ways, who is that *supream and absolute One*? Is it fit to be said to such a *Prince* as he is, thou art ungodly, and to condemn him who is most just? O! be much in the study of the soveraignty of *God*, when he, as it were, doth call as in a solemn assembly, all your terrors round about.

There is this likewayes which doth occasion it, which is our little being in the meditation and serious thoughts of the brevity of our life and of time: If a man knew that it were but for an hour, or for ten days that he were to endure tribulation, he might patiently submit, and bear with his rod: this is clear, 1 *Cor.* 7. 29. compared with the following verses, where, from that doctrine that time was short, he doth infer this exhortation, *let those that weep, be as though they weeped not*, as if he would have said, let them not be much moved with those things, time will have a close: Believe me, it is not long before the smal period of time that hath interveened betwixt eternity before, and eternity after, shall be sweetly swallowed up, and there shall be nothing but eternity.

And there is this lastly which doth occasion our great discontentment, under our rod, which is, that unmortifiedness & unsubduedness of spirit: pride being the great predominant evil, and if we may allude to that word, *Only by pride cometh contention*; we may certainly say it holdeth well here, that only by pride are these contendings that we have with *God*, concerning his dispensations towards us. In sum, it is this, it is impossible for a Christian not to be humble,

humble, to be content: pride is one of the greatest opposites unto divine contentment under any rod that we meet with: O! but if a Christian were humble, he might sit in the dust, and sweetly adore the infinit love and patience of God.

Now we shall in the second place propose some considerations, that may hinder a Christian, or any other, from being discontent with any lot that doth befall them; and the first is this, that there are many sad and wofull companions of a Christians discontentment and repynning against any dispensation of God, and we conceive there is not only this bad companion, that a Christian hereby is indisposed and unfitted to go about spiritual duties, especially these two, of *prayer* and *praise*: It is impossible for a Christian that is under the exercise of discontentment, to pray or praise; there is somewhat of this pointed at, 1 *Tim.* 2. 8. where this is a qualification of a right prayer, that he should be without wrath, not having any murmurings or repynings within his heart: as likewyses it is clear concerning praise, *Psal.* 57. 7. *My heart is fixed; it is fixed*, which speaketh so much as this, that praise doth require a divine and composed frame of spirit: and it is most certain, that discontentment doth impede prayer, for there are three sweet ingredients of the exercise of prayer, which discontentment doth exceedingly out off; there is love, fervency, and faith; which no doubt discontentment doth abridge; a discontented Christian cannot be a Christian burning with love; jealousy is such a predominant with him, that love cannot be his exercise: And certainly, if prayer did not proceed from



from the precious principle of love , it wants that one arm which it ought to have : Neither can a Christian exercise faith , because he hath now , as it were, taken up so bad an opinion of God, that he cannot repose his confidence nor hope in him : And as for fervency , they are so much in porring upon their present lot, that they can as it were, be fervent about nothing , but only in the removal of that. It is certain , that let a Christian examine himself, there is nothing that cuts the neck of prayer so much as discontent ; in a manner , the spirit as it were, is turned brutish, being uncomposed for any spiritual converse with God.

There is this bad companion likewayes , which accompanieth discontentment, we are incapacitat, and rendered altogether unable to resist temptations while discontentment is in exercise. It is impossible for a Christian to be a Mortifier , or resister of lust, when discontentment is once in exercise ; And there are these two evils , that get most marvelous advantage under discontentment, and these are, the predominant lust of such a one, be what it will , and pride , these two evils do spring apace : And certainly , all other lusts do get much victory over such a one : a Christian may losse more by one hours discontentment under a crosse , then he can regain in many Months, yea on this side of eternity: And it is no wonder that temptations do prevail upon such a one, he is off his watch, and his strength is gone : In a manner , temptation speaketh that, *Their strength is gone from them , let us go up and put them to flight.*

There is this bad companion likewayes , that doth

doth accompany discontentment, want of tenderness of spirit, and the losse of it. It is most certain, that there is nothing that doth cut off tenderness, so much as discontentment: for a Christian that is such, is not living under the impression of the fear, or of the love of the Almighty, which are the two great principles of tenderness of spirit. Certainly, let one examine they will find, that by their anxiety and bitterness of spirit, they have made their hearts to die as a stone within them, and have made their bands strong upon their spirits.

And there is this last bad companion of discontentment, A Christians undervaluing of all the former mercies which he hath received, when once a Christian meeteth with that which contradisteth his humor, he loseth his esteem of every thing that formerly hath been bestowed upon him: There is something of this pointed at, *Gen. 37.* last, in *Jacobs* impatency of the loss of *Joseph*; where he doth undervalue all his mercies beside; And it is most clear in that word, *Esth. 5. 12, 13.* where, though it be spoken of a wicked man, yet by proportion it holdeth of a Christian, that because *Mordicai* did not bow his knee, he cried forth, concerning all his other mercies, *they avail me nothing*; he knew not what it was to put a price upon mercies that he had received; but because this which was the great lust of his heart was away, he did undervalue the rest: And it is most certain, that there is nothing doth so heighten a Christians disrespect unto the most precious and excellent things of *God*, as this of discontent: And this is one subtilty and device of *Sathan*, that a Christian may with greater ease and with less

less conviction do it: They do ordinarily construe give  
their choicest mercies, to be delusions, and sowl  
upon that account begin to undervalue and misprize  
them.

There is this consideration which may move the  
you to wrestle against discontentment, It is a  
character and distinguishing mark of a Christian  
from a Reprobate: I would have Murmurers seri-  
ously to meditate upon that sad word, which is in  
*Jude. 19. vers. compared with the 15. where speak-  
ing of Christs coming to judge and execute ven-  
geance, the first put in the roll are these, These are the  
Murmurers and complainers: and that word 1 Cor. 13.  
10. 10. Be not murmurers, as many of them were, and  
were destroyed by the destroyer: And certainly, it is  
no wonder that Murmuring passe under so bad a  
notion, not only because it is indeed that sin, which  
speaketh out our Atheism most, but because it is  
that sin which doth declare most a Christian or any  
others desire to be independent, and not in subjec-  
tion unto God, In a manner, such is the woful ambi-  
tion of our spirit, that we desire not to depend  
upon him, but that we should have our own lot in  
our own hand, to carve out unto our selves. O! That  
we know not what it is to give Christ a negative  
vote in the dispensations that do befall us: we love  
to be co-ordinat with God, and not subordinat to  
him. O put a blank in his hand, desire him to fill  
it up with what he liketh: Christ doth oft-times  
put a blank in a Christians hand, as in that word,  
*What will ye that I should do unto you*, there is Christs  
blank, that he doth give us, and though thorow  
our ignorance we cannot fill it up, it is best to  
give*



and give it back to himself, that he may fill it up, with  
 so what he listeth.

There is this consideration also, that may per-  
 swade you to desist from discontentment; It is  
 that sin which doth interrupt the accomplishment  
 of the promises. As likewayes it doth interrupt  
 the exercise of faith upon the promises; this is  
 clear, *Nam.* 14. 27. compared with 28. where that  
 promise that was given to them of entering into  
 the land of *Canaan*, they were cut short of it, be-  
 cause of their murmuring: and it doth interrupt  
 the exercise of faith upon the promises, as is clear,  
 for *Psal.* 106. 24. compared with *vers.* 25. where it is  
 said, *they believed not his word*, and the ground of it  
 is given, *for they were murmurers*: And it is no won-  
 der that murmuring interrupt the exercise of faith  
 upon the promises; for it is impossible for a mur-  
 murer either to have the faith of the omnipotency  
 of *God*, or to have the faith of his goodness or love,  
 which are these two precious pillars of faith upon  
 which it must build it self: O! but these that begin  
 once to debate with him, do quickly put faith out  
 of exercise. And I would have you knowing this,  
 O! That there is a discontentment of judgement, and  
 of the will and affections; and  
 oft-times a Christian will win over the discontent-  
 ment of judgement and reason, when he cannot mor-  
 tifie the discontentment of his will and affections;  
 for the sovereignty of *God*; and the sinfulness of  
 our nature, will silence our reason; but, no doubt,  
 it must be his own immediat hand, that must silence  
 the murmurings of our will: this is clear, *Psal.* 42.  
 where *David* is convinced of the unreasonableness  
 of

of his discontent, and yet he is forced to debate with his will concerning the quieting of it.

There is this consideration likewayes, which may provoke you to desist from discontentment under your lot; It is a most unreasonable evil for a Christian to be discontent: for as *Christ* speaketh *Matth.* 6. 27. What profit have you by taking thought? Can you add one cubit to your stature? It is a poor thing, when a man hath lost his goods, to lose his patience also: what a poor revenge is that which a man taketh of himself? And certainly, the unreasonableness of impatience under the rod, doth not only appear in this, that it hindereth and interrupteth a Christians seeing of any mercy that is in the rod, it is impossible for a discontented one to take up mercy in his stroke: but also that impatience is the compendious way, for the prolonging of your strait; and the involving of you in greater miseries and thraldoms: As likewayes, impatience doth heighten and increase the cause of your bondage, and multiplieth your iniquities: O! but it is a sweet and excellent study for a Christian, to increase your patience under every lot? And, in a manner, when we cannot read love in his hand, nor in his face, because of his frowns and strokes, yet by faith to draw aside the vail, and read love in his heart, and cry forth, *I know the thoughts of his heart, that they are thoughts of peace, and not of evil*: Certainly it is through discontentment, that we cry forth *Though his words be as soft as oil and butter, yet war is in his heart*; we do charge him with contradictions betwixt his profession and his purposes.

And there is this consideration likewayes, which

may deter you from discontentment, which is this, It is impossible for a Christian to profite by his rod, while he is discontent: all the time that a Christian is under the fit of impatience, he spendeth so much of his time most prodigally: not employing it, not promoting that which is the great design of the rod, *to take away Sin*, but studying to involve himself in greater captivity and bondage, and to subject himself under the hand of his iniquities. O! that ye might be perswaded to exercise a more divine contentment under your lot, and that ye may be more exercised in contemplating and beholding those precious and excellent things that are above. That is a most remarkable word which *Jacob* had to *Esau*, Gen. 33. 11. *I have enough*: the word in the original is this, *I have all*: And as our Criticks do observe, that word which *Esau* had in the 8 verse; *I have enough*, is not that which *Jacob* hath in the 11. vers. *I have enough*; that though *Jacob* was a poorer man then *Esau*, yet he had all: Such a Christian as hath *Christ* for his portion, may sweetly sing, though I be poor, yet do I possess all things, *as having nothing, and yet possessing all things, as sorrowing, yet alwayes rejoycing, as poor and yet behold we are rich*. It is not long before that day shall come, *when Christ shall make up his Jewels*, when there shall be a clear and most lyable difference made betwixt the precious and the vile: Behold he is upon his way, and therefore do not murmur nor repine: A Christian must not expect two heavens, it is enough, if he possess one, we must not travel to heaven thorow a bed of roses, it is not much though we go to heaven in a fiery chariot,



chariot, having afflictions and calamity our companions all alongs the way: when our feet shall be passing thorow the threshold of the door of our everlasting rest, then our chains shall fall from our hands, and our fetters from our feet, then might we lift up our heads with joy and rejoyce. O! but when those heavens which you behold shall be rolled up as a scroll, when those two great vails, the visible vail of the heavens, and the invisible vail of iniquity shall be rent from the top to the bottom, and we shal have most clear & precious discoveries of that noble plant of renown, when we shall sit down at the well head and drink, and forget our misery, and remember our poverty no more: let hope *evanish* unto fruition, and faith unto possession, and let time sweetly *evanish* unto eternity.

## S E R M O N X.

Phil. 4. 11. *I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.*

**I**T is an ordinary and usual error and delusion among Christians, that they place the exercise of religion in these duties that are more sublime and high unto their apprehension, as faith, hope, and prayer, but undervalue the exercise of those lower duties as contentment, mortification to the world, and charity to the poor, as not being so essentially necessary for the beeing of a Christian. I am perswaded, that if any of you had been a hearer of the Apostle *James*, when he was discoursing upon that divine subject, wherein pure Religion & usefulness did consist, no doubt, ye would have imagined

that he would have brought forth some divine and profound thing, in the exercise of which, pure Religion before *God and the Father*, did consist: but believe me, Religion doth more consist in practice, then in speculation, and more in obedience, then in refined notions: What conceive ye of such a definition of pure Religion and undefiled, as that which is *Jam. 1. 27. Pure religion and undefiled* doth consist in mortification to the world, and in charity to the poor, those two low undervalued duties. And this may further ingratiate and commend the exercise of these low and undervalued duties that in the day when *Christ* shall appear to judge the quick and the dead, the ground of the approbation of the Saints shall be founded upon this low and contemptible duty, *charity to the poor*, and shall be that ground which is given out that eternal blessedness, which approbation of *Jesus Christ*, no doubt is a confirmation of *James* his doctrine: and that which shall be the ground of the reprobation of the wicked, shall be the neglect of this low duty, *want of charity to the poor, and visiting of the fatherless*: And believe me, in the exercise of this divine equality of Christian-contentment, not a little of religion doth consist: *Paul* saith, *Godliness with contentment is great gain*. It is by faith, that a Christian enjoyeth *God*, it is by love that he enjoyeth his neighbour, and by contentment that he enjoyeth himself. We confess it is a most mysterious and difficult lesson for a Christian in each lot he is placed in, to be crying forth, *It is good for me to be here, let me make a tabernacle here*. Ordinarily we have strong desires to have the carving out of our own lot.

lot. Solomon maketh mention of *three things*, that are not satisfied, and of *four things* that never say it is enough, the grave, the barren womb, the earth that is not filled with water, and the fire. And we may add unto these four, this one fifth, the most part of men who are unsatisfied in their lot: It is no wonder that men unlimited in their desires, meet with great disappointments, for those that have exorbitant and excentrick desires, must have great hopes, as likewises great disappointments: Therefore it were certainly your advantage, to be studying to compendize and abridge your desires after these things that are here below: for as one spoke well, he conceived that the greatest riches of a man did consist in poverty of desires, and in being content with that lot, wherein God had placed him. There are only these three things that befall a Christian, under which it is great difficulty for him to attain to contentment; there is the loss of his predominant lust & idol, especially if it be any whit refined & veiled under the veil & vizard of any vertue, as if one be given unto the seeking of the applause of the world, there is nothing under which there is so great a difficulty to exercise contentment, as in the losing of that applause, our hearts oft-times crying forth, *they have taken away my gods, and what have I more?* And certainly, oft-times our lusts die unto us, before we die unto them, which is the occasion that our living lusts, do sit down and lament over the graves of our buried idols, and wisheth that they may awake and stand up from the dead. And we shall only say to such, *Wo to you when all men shall speak well of you*, which may hinder



hinder people from pursuing after that idol, but much more especially that word, *Joh. 5. 44. How can ye believe, that seek glory one of another;* which words seem to import an inconsistency betwixt the exercise of faith, and betwixt the exercise of pursuit after idols.

There is this likewyses that befalleth a Christian, under which it is a great difficulty for him to attain to contentment, and that is the continuance and lengthning forth of any affliction that doth befall him; Oft-times a Christian, when first he meeteth with his cross, will salute and imbrace it, and will cry forth, *this is a grief, and I must bear it*: but when the threed of our affliction is spun out unto any length, then we begin to be discontent and to cry forth, *hast thou found me, O thou mine enemy?* This was clear in the exercise of *Job*, who when first he met with his cross, did expresse divine contentment under a most eminent way, crying forth, *blessed be the Name of the Lord*; when he was made to possess months of vanity, and wearisome nights were appointed for him, then he cryeth forth, *I choose strangling and death, rather than life*. And we shall only say to such, be much in the meditation of that precious and immense hope, and go up to the top of *Mount Pisgah* and there be with *Moses* in the viewing of that land which is afar off. As likewyses, study to seal that divine conclusion, *that he doth all things well*.

There is this thirdly which befalleth a Christian, under which he hath a great difficulty to exercise contentment, which is, poverty and want in the world. *Solomon* who was well acquainted with his own

own heart, and knew well his unsuitableness to bear such a cross, cryeth forth, *Prov. 30 8, 9. Give me not poverty, lest I steal, and take the name of my God in vain.* It is certain, that to exercise faith upon God, for the receipt of common mercies, is more difficult, then to exercise faith on God for our eternal salvation, and for our interest in *Jesus Christ*. And we conceive, that the reason why a Christian findeth greater difficulty, to exercise faith upon God, for the receipt of these common mercies, then for the receiving of that cardinal and unspeakable mercy, *salvation through Jesus Christ*, to be either this, that faith, when it is exercised upon the one most simply and immediately relyeth upon the omnipotency and faithfulness of God, abstracted from all other props and considerations, for there sense and reason doth contradict the exercise of faith; but when Christians do exercise faith upon God for righteousness and salvation, they ordinarily have either somewhat of sense or somewhat of holy reason, that doth under-prop and help their faith. And this likeways is the occasion of it, that not so ordinarily a Christian is put to the exercise of the one, as unto the exercise of the other: But believe me, It is no small difficulty, for a Christian to add confidence upon God, when he is reduced unto a low and pinching estate in the world: And we shall only say to such who murmur and repine under such an estate; cast your eyes upon him who was the heir of all things, of whom it is recorded, *that he had not so much as where to lay his head.* As likeways, cast your eyes upon a number of that precious cloud of witnesses, who are now entred into

the everlasting possession of that precious and excellent lot, who were constrained to wander in dens and caves of the earth, having sheep and goat-skins for their cloathing. Ye are now in the estate of your minority, and therefore ye are rich but in hope and expectation, and so ye may dispense, though ye be not rich in possession; though we may say, a Christian that hath *him who is all in all* must of necessity enjoy all and all.

Now that which we shall further speak upon this divine quality of contentment, besides these things which we spoke at the last occasion, we shall point out a little, the difficulty of attaining unto contentment under every lot and estate that a Christian falleth in: The difficulty of it is fully shown in that word, *I have learned*, as it were, it speaketh so much as this, once *Paul* was an ignorant of this mysterious lesson of divine contentment, but he was instructed by him, who is that Prince of Pastors, by whom he did attain to the knowledge of this: and this speaketh forth the difficulty of it, that a Christian must be much in self-examination, and self-searching before he can attain unto contentment: there is somewhat of this pointed at, *Gal. 4. 4. Examine your selves upon your beds, and there* a promise annexed to this, *and ye shall be still, or be still*: And the influence that self-examination hath upon this divine quality of contentment, may not only appear in this, that a Christian who is much reflecting upon himself, taketh up ordinarily a habitableness betwixt the cross and his humour, as were, he seeth infinit wisdom shining in carving such a lot and dispensation unto him, and so is



constrained to adore the unsearchable riches of the wisdom of *God*: As likewayes, its influence may be shewen in this, that a Christian who is much in self-examination, doth behold such spots and blemishes in himself, that he is forced to wonder, that it is not worse with him, and so is constrained to glorifie *God* in the fire. I confess, it may be a wonder, that this is not a wonder unto a Christian every day, that he is not consumed, and cut off from his right hand. O! that ye would once be much in the study of your self: That ancient advice of a heathen, *γινώσκει σεαυτον*, know your self, were worthy to be practised by all Christians; we are too much roving abroad, and too little at home. It is reported of some Beasts, that they have eyes to see abroad but have no eyes to see at home; which no doubt is the case and exercise of the most part who live in these dayes.

This likewayes pointeth forth the difficulty of attaining to this duty of contentment, that a Christian before he can attain it, must be much in the exercise of these two cardinal graces, *Faith and love*; certainly, till once we be studying the exercise of them, contentment will be at a low and weak standing with us: And no doubt, the exercise of faith, not only in concluding our interest in *Jesus Christ*, and in sealing that conclusion, that *he is ours*, is most necessary for attaining of contentment; but likewayes the exercise of faith for attaining of contentment may be shewen in this, that faith is that grace, which is the best interpreter of the dispensations of *God*: This may be recorded in the commendation of the grace of faith, that they knowe

he knoweth not, what it is to bring up a bad report  
 upon God. And certainly as long as we consult with  
 these three bad counsellors, sense, reason, and mis-  
 belief about the dispensations of God, this will be  
 the result of that counsel to have sorrow in your  
 heart dayly, but study to imploy that wise counsel-  
 or Faith, which sometimes, because it is so intelli-  
 gent a grace, is called *understanding*, as is clear from  
 Col. 2.2. Now this is clear that faith hath influence  
 upon contentment, 2 Sam. 23.5. where David from  
 this, that God had made with him an everlasting  
 covenant, he cryeth forth, I am not much anxious,  
 though other things should fail, *and though my house*  
*should not be so with God.* As likewayes it is clear,  
 Psal. 142. 4, 5. where the exercise of faith upon  
 this, *that God was his portion*, made him with pati-  
 ence to submit *though all refuge should fail him*, and  
*though none upon his right hand, or his left hand should*  
*care for his soul*; As likewayes, Psal. 37. 1. com-  
 pared with vers. 3. where he presseth that duty of  
 trusting in God, by which they might obviat the ex-  
 ercise of discontent and fretting. Love likewayes  
 xeno doubt, must be exercised, before a Christian do  
 attain unto this divine quality of contentment :  
 There are these two precious properties of love  
 which are given, 1 Cor. 13. 4, 5. *Love endureth long,*  
*and love thinketh no evil*, which, no doubt, have  
 great influence upon contentment; we confess love  
 sometimes is the most impatient grace of a Christi-  
 an, and sometimes the most patient grace of a  
 Christian; in a manner, love when it is in its most  
 vigorous exercise, will endure more sad afflictions  
 than faith; Faith sometimes will be languishing and  
 giving

giving over, when love will support and strengthen it, it being afraid to seal that woful conclusion, *that he is not ours* ; love knoweth not what it is to intertain jealous thoughts of him, who is the lover, *it thinketh no evil* : And certainly ; when the grace of love is in its vigorous exercise, it is most tender to act any thing, by which the person that is loved may be wronged, or a bad report may be brought up upon him. A Christian that is united unto precious *Christ*, by that golden and invisible chain of his beauty, and transcendent excellency, can with patience endure the loss of all things beside *Christ* ; love is peremptory in nothing but this, the enjoyment of the loved : And love is sorrowful for nothing, but the loss of him who is loved : he moveth in so high a sphere, and is so far elevated above all things that are here below, that in a manner, he possesseth his soul in patience in the midst of those revolutions and changes that are here below ; in a manner, the grace of love doth incorporat a Christian in *Jesus Christ*, and doth make him to dwell in *Christ* as his mansion and house, and so he is not much taken up with those things that are abroad.

There is this likewises, which speaketh forth the difficulty of attaining unto divine contentment, and it is this, a Christian must be much in the exercise of the grace of Mortification to all these passing and transient vanities of the world ; do not these risings and murmurings of spirit, speak the little exercise of Mortification that is amongst us ? for if we were once mortified to the world, we should then exercise contentment under every lot : this is clear from the comparing of these two places, *Psal. 119. 29* where



where *David* saith, *I have seen an end of all perfection,* which speaketh forth that distinct discovery that he had of the vanity of the world: in a manner, he had it brought within his sight, which is one of the most unerring senses, compared with that most remarkable place; which breaths forth much of divine contentment in him, *2 Sam. 15. 25, 26.* where he saith, *But if he say, I have no delight in thee, behold, here am I, let him do unto me, as seemeth good unto him.* Here, in a manner, is *David* making a resignation of his crown, and seeing an end of the perfection of that glistering and passing vanity. As likewises it may be shown from the paralleling of these two places, *Gal. 6. 14.* where *Paul* saith of himself, *I am crucified to the world, and the world is crucified to me;* in a manner, *Paul* and the world made a sorrowless parting, as two dead men parting one from another: and the words that we have read, where he breatheth forth this divine quality of contentment. I think certainly, a Christian reflecting upon the changeableness, inconstancy and vexation of things here below will not be much moved with the loss of them. It was upon this ground that heathens did attain unto such a length in this divine quality of contentment, for they beholding, that fear and desires were the two inseparable companions of those that had most of these fancied delights of the world; for even those that have the greatest abundance, are vexed betwixt these two passions, *fear and desire*: fear to lose what they have attained, and desire to attain more: We conceive, that it is a remarkable thing that is recorded of *Sesistris* King of Egypt, who was so ambitious, that

he would needs have his Chariot drawn with four Kings, one of which had his eye continually upon the motion of the wheel of the Chariot, which the King observing, did ask him the ground why he did so exercise himself? He did most fitly reply, it putteth me in mind of the mutability and changeableness of the things of the world; for, saith he, the highest part of the wheel is instantly the lowest part, and the lowest part of the wheel, is instantly the highest; which moved that ambitious Prince to desist from so ambitious a practice: And believe me, if ye would read that inscription upon the forehead of all things, *vanity and vexation of spirit*, ye might easily attain unto contentment.

There is this fourthly which speaketh forth the difficulty of attaining unto contentment, that a Christian before he win to it, must necessarily be mortified unto that innate and connatural idol of pride: Pride must be once brought low, before contentment can be attained? We conceive, discontent and pride have sworn a covenant of agreement, that they shall be undivided in their life, and undivided in death, they are chained together by an unchangeable chain of amity; and believe me, it is impossible for a Christian to be discontent, but he must of necessity be proud; And upon the contrary, a Christian that is proud, he must of necessity be a discontented one; for there is nothing that is the mother of contentment so much, as humility, which moveth a Christian silently to bear his yoke, and to sit down, and put his mouth in the dust, because he hath done it. In a manner, a humble one, and one that hath distinct knowledge

of his own baseness, knoweth not what it is to cry forth, *Why am I thus?* such a one is much in admiration, and little under murmuring, much in praise, and little in complaint.

There is this lastly, which pointeth forth the difficulty of it, a Christian cannot win to contentment, without he be much in heavenly mindedness, and have his spirit in a spiritual and heavenly frame. There is somewhat of this pointed at, *Joh. 14. 1.* compared with the 2. vers. where *Christ* proposing a remedy unto the discontentment of the Disciples, that their souls should not be troubled, he doth begin a discourse of heaven, that in his Fathers house were many mansions, and that they had an interest into it: As like wayes, there is somewhat of this pointed at, *Matth. 6. 25, 26.* where to obviat their taking thought what they should eat, or what they should drink, or wherewith they should be cloathed, he desireth them to seek first the Kingdom of God. And certainly one that is much taken up in the contemplation of eternal life, and who is viewing these precious and endless delights that are at his right hand, moveth in a most composed and divine frame, in a manner, he drowneth the thoughts of his present miseries, in those precious depths of eternity: he knoweth that one moment of the enjoyment of precious *Christ*, shal fully recompense and make up all those sorrows that he hath met with. I know not as what shall be the thoughts of Christians, when that earl volumn of the mercies of the Lord, shall be presented unto them, which they have met with here below: how may they be filled with admiration to see that book written within and without, of the



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receipts of most singular and precious demonstrations of his love.

We shall secondly speak a little to provoke you to the pursuit of this divine quality, and so to these advantages that a Christian hath by exercising contentment under every lot: We conceive, it is so excellent a grace, this grace of contentment, that it is indeed a compound of these five graces, faith, humility, patience, hope and mortification; in a manner contentment is the result of all these graces, exercising themselves in one; and except those be in a most vigorous exercise, that absolute contentment is not easily to be attained: but no doubt, it must be an excellent thing that deriveth its pedigree and descent from so high and excellent things, as those precious graces of the spirit. But the first advantage that a Christian hath by divine contentment, under his saddest lot, is this, it doth advance a Christian unto most nigh fellowship and correspondence with God; as likewises a contented one receiveth most sweet manifestations of the presence and fellowship of God with him under his cross: It is most certain, that contentment when it is attained, is ordinarily accompanied with most nearness and correspondence with him: there is somewhat of this pointed at, *Heb. 13. 5.* Where pressing that doctrine of contentment, he saith, *the Lord will not leave you nor forsake you*, which, though we confess it be principally understood of his providence yet it may include the manifestations of his presence: as likewise that in *1 Jam. 4. 7.* *Humble your selves under his band*, which he is pressing from this duty of contentment, *and he shall lift you up*: And no doubt,

that

that invitation doth oft-times come to a contented Christian, *Come unto me from Amana, and from the top of Shenir, and from the mount Lebanon,* Can. 4. 8. Christ loveth to dwell with one that walketh in a composed and silent frame of spirit: And the reason why a contented Christian enjoyeth much of God under his cross, is because he is much in prayer: It is impossible for a discontented Christian to pray to any purpose under his cross, for he wanteth that divine qualification that is required in prayer, *to lift up his hands without wrath*, the soul is in such a confused and distempered frame, *it is so troubled that it cannot speak*; this is clear from *Psal. 77. 4, or 5. vers.* where David had this disadvantage by his discontent, *I am so troubled, (saith he) that I cannot speak*: though we conceive that there is that which is imitable in David in that case, that a Christian, when he cannot speak, he may make this prayer, *I am so troubled that I cannot speak*, which was David's practice in that Psalm. There is this second advantage that a Christian hath by the exercise of divine contentment, the want of it doth exceedingly obstruct and hinder a Christians improving for the cross of his advantage: a Christian that is discontent cannot receive any advantage by his cross; there is somewhat of this pointed, *Heb. 12. 11.* where the peaceable fruits of righteousness flow to a Christian that is exercised under his cross, which no doubt doth take in the divine quality of contentment. There are these three precious advantages, that a Christian may have by his cross, which discontent doth exceedingly obstruct, there is the exercise of humility, the exercise of prayer, and the exercise of

of mortification : one that is discontent , doth obstruct that great advantage of the cross, even humility ; he is so much in repining against the dispensation of *God* , that he cannot at all sit down , and fold his feet , and quietly bear his yoke. O ! but contentment includeth in its bosome much divine humility : In a manner, a Christian, when he is content , is clothed with it : discontentment is the mother of pride, and doth add fuel unto that fire : discontent doth likeways obstruct mortification and conformity with *God*, which is the precious end of the cross , *he doth chastise us, that we may be partakers of his holiness* : And this is the fruit of all these things, to take away your sin. And certainly, a discontented Christian cannot be a Christian taken up in mortification ; yea it is most certain, that a Christian may lose more by one hours discontent, then he can gain in many dayes ; yea on this side of eternity ; O ! to what a length may discontent lead one ? Likeways it doth obstruct the exercise of prayer, which is a precious end of the cross, *in their affliction they will seek me early, and when my chastening hand is upon them , they will then pour forth their prayers into my bosom* : but one that is in a distempered & discontented frame, is incapacitate to go about this duty of prayer , he is so much in conversing with his cross that he cannot be much in conversing with *God* : And that is certainly one great defect in a Christian, that they are more taken up in studying the disadvantages of the cross, then in studying the advantages of it ; the most part of us , will be Orators like *Cicero* in declaiming our calamities, and in setting them forth to the full, as



it is clear in *Job*, who proved a most elegant Orator in setting forth his calamities, but in the exercise of praise our tongues stick to the roof of our mouth, and we are silent unto *God*. There is this third advantage that a Christian hath by the exercise of contentment, it doth obviate and obstruct many temptations, that a Christian is liable unto by his discontentment. I know not any sin in Scripture that hath produced such bad and woful effects, as that sin of discontentment: what made *Achitophel* to seek a cord, and go hang himself, was it not his discontent? discontent is the mother of most sad and desperat resolutions; for we cannot submit unto our cross, and therefore we study to extricate our self out of our cross, by envolving and entring our selves into that endless and unsupportable cross. Therefore we would desire you under your afflictions to study contentment: O! what atheistical thoughts will lodge in the bosom of one that is discontent: we may see them clearly in the practice of *David*, who cryed forth, under his discontentment, *I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency*. Certainly there is nothing that will occasion the want of the faith of the existency of a Deity, and that there is not a *God*, so much as in this of discontentment. There is this fourth advantage that a Christian hath by his contentment, it maketh the cross most easie to a Christian: would you know what is the greatest ingredient of the heaviness of any cross, it is discontent: It is certain, by it we make our chain more heavy and more unsupportable upon our necks; whileas, if we were studying this divine quality of contentment.

ment, it should abate much of the bitterness of the cross : we may say to one that hath attained to contentment, they may cry forth, *the bitterness of death is past*, and may thus triumph over their cross, *O cross where is thy sting, and O affliction, where is your victory?* Certainly, discontent is that which maketh us to sit down, and cry forth, *my stroak is heavier then my groaning*. Did you never know what is was to bear your affliction with much inward joy and peace of mind, when you had this grace of contentment?

There is this advantage likewayes that a Christian hath by exercising contentment under his cross, that he meeteth with; It is a compendious way for a Christian to win to an outgate under his cross. Would you know what is the most compendious way, to have the threed of your affliction spun out unto a long length? then study discontentment: But would you know what is the most spiritual and compendious way to have the rod taken off, and to have God, no more to turn about the face of his Throne? then study contentment: In a manner the cross hath gotten and obtained that end and errand why it was sent, when you do attain to contentment and humility under it: We may say of the sin of discontent, that it is a most irrational and reasonless sin, for you cannot by your discontent, extricate your self out of your calamities; all the advantage that you have by it is this, to make your bonds stronger upon your spirits, and to have your fetters and chains lying more heavily upon you.

There is this advantage likewayes that a Christian hath by the exercise of contentment under every

rod that he meeteth with, it is that divine quality  
of the soul by which a Christian doth attain to most  
mortification unto the pleasures and vanities of a  
world. O ! how sweetly will a contented Christian,  
under the loss of things here below , speak to the  
dispraise of these fancied images ? it is a poor sight,  
to behold a living substance tyed unto shaddows by  
these two iron chains of *love and delight*. Ought we  
not to study so much holy ambition and spiritual  
generosity , as to undervalue all things that are be-  
low God, as being below us ? In a manner, as *Jonadab*  
spoke to *Amnon*, 2 Sam. 13. 4 *Why art thou, being a kings*  
*son, lean from day to day ?* We may likewayes bespeak  
the heirs of the promise, & those that are begotten  
by a lively hope , who being the children of him  
who is the King of kings , do you wax lean for the  
loss or want of those things that are here below ?  
Have you not a kingdom And why then should  
you repine at the loss of these things, which are but  
passing and transient vanities ? That which is the  
great idol of the world , *silver and gold*, what is it  
but more refined dust ? It is white and yellow clay :  
And we conceive, that much of the excellency of  
it doth consist in the estimation of men , that they  
have so valued it : but one that hath the assurance  
of eternal life , and that *God* is their's , may walk  
thorow the wilderness with joy. We confess, it is  
an evil amongst the heirs of promise, that they love  
to go to heaven thorow a most easie and pleasant  
way, they love to walk to that palace of everlasting  
rest , thorow a valley of roses ; but we must not  
meet with two heavens, it is abundance, if we have  
that one eternal and everlasting heaven. And as for



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the cause of discontent under our cross, or any calamity that we meet with, we conceive pride and want of mortification are those two catholic and general grounds of all our discontent and impatience.

We shal shut up our discourse upon this diuine quality of contentment, desiring that men that have abundance of the world may study contentment: though this may seem a paradox unto many, why those that have enough, should yet be desired to pursue after contentment: We conceive, there are none more discontent, then those that have the greatest occasion of contentment; their desires are by so much wedded unto things here below, that their voice is never heard among them, *It is enough*, and *I am satisfied*: I conceive, that may fully confute that vain opinion that Christians and others do in-ycertain, that if they had such a competency of the world, they would be discontent no more but they would silently make on in their way? and that which is the ground of their discontent is (as they alledge) the want of a competency of subsistencie: I shal only say to you, that which is recorded of *Alexander*, who after he had purchased the possession of the world, he was so far from attaining to contentment that (as it is recorded of him) he bowed down and wept, because there was not another world to purchase. And believe me, this is most undeniable, that if you cannot attain to contentment under your present lot, it is impossible for you to attain to contentment when your lot is better? It is only the delusion of Sathan, under which the evil of your discontent is veiled.

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But as for those that have abundance of these worldly goods, we shal press this exhortation upon them which is, *Prov. 23. 4. Labour not to be rich,* which is a thing that ye will not easily close with, though certainly *riches* ( as he there most divinely speaketh ) *are a thing that is not.* Now this is most clear that there is a necessity of pressing these, who have abundance of the world to be content, where *Paul* doth subjoyn in the following words, *I know* ( saith he ) *how to abound.* People might have imagined, that is no great lesson, but believe me, it is a great, if not greater, then the other, which is that by which we would presse contentment to those that are poor in each lot and estate that they fall in here below : know this that the day is coming, when ye shal acknowledge infinit wisdom in guiding you to heaven by that way. O give *Christ* a negative vote in the dispensation of your lots, and be content to be regulated by him, *who is that wonderful counsellor*, who, though he lead you by a way that ye know not, yet take *Christs* advice upon implicity faith, for he knoweth not what it is to disappoint any of their expectations. Study contentment, for that is heaven brought down to earth : for what is the happines and blessedness of those that are above ? It is confined in this one word, *Contentment*; they have now all anxiety, and all loathing, and all desires save one, taken away from them. O ! what a life must it be to drink of the rivers of pleasures ? Did you ever know or read of such a river, the waters whereof were pure delight and pleasure ? when we shal sit down, and be overjoyed with these consolations, that shall flow from his

face.

*ment.*  
we shall draw forth that endless line  
of eternity, in having joy and light  
in admiration and praise flowing out: be-  
cause the gleanings of a Christian, are better  
than the vintage of a reprobate; Little that a right  
man hath, is better, then the riches of many wicked  
for it is a messenger of hope, of that more endur-  
ing substance which Christ shal give? And since it  
is the exercise of those that are above, let it be the  
exercise of those that are below, that there may  
be a sweet conformity and harmony betwixt the  
practice of that higher house, and the practice of  
this lower house that we may have our souls united  
unto him who is perfumed with all the powders of the  
merchant, and whose garments do smell of myrrhe and  
aloes. Believe this, time shortly is to have a pe-  
riod, and eternity is to come. Let a Christian  
comfort himself in this, eternity is at hand when  
they shal hear that voice, and truth sealed by the  
oath of an Angel, time shal be no more: Let that  
precious day come, and let all other dayes pass  
away.

**FINIS**

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